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SPARKLES FROM SARATOGA



BY SOPHIE SPARKLE.



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BY
SOPHIE SPARKLE.

(By Jennie E. Hicks)

ILLUSTRATED.

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“ Sparkling and bright, in liquid light,
Does the wine our goblets gleam in ;
With hue as red as the rosy bed
Which a bee would choose to dream in.

Then drink to-night, with hearts as light,
To loves as gay as fleeting,
As bubbles that swim, in the beakers' brim,
And part on the lips when meeting.”

CHARLES FENNO HOFFMAN.



SPARKLES FROM SARATOGA.

I.

MANAGING A HUSBAND.

IF there be one thing more exasperating than another in this wicked world, it is surely an obdurate man! And the worst of it is, that most men are painfully afflicted in this manner. For six mortal weeks have Madge and I besieged papa to allow us to spend the summer season at that Mecca of fashionable pilgrims—Saratoga. But the dear man, from some unaccountable reason, absolutely refused. Nevertheless, being *mere women*, we never take “no” for an answer, and set about making the necessary preparations, such as ordering new dresses, and reconsidering old ones, while mamma undertook the task of managing her refractory lord and master!

Husbands usually require but a little skilful, feminine manœuvring to make them walk in the desired path, and if ever a woman had the art of

managing a husband at the tip of her fingers' ends, or, still more effectually, at the tip of her tongue, that woman is certainly mamma. Madge and I had the utmost faith in her ultimate success; and in proof that we were right in placing a high estimate upon her virtues as a coxer, here we are fairly in Saratoga at last, with Aunt Prim for a duenna. It may be whispered that we would have preferred mamma in this interesting *rôle*, since she has a way of viewing things blandly through her dear old spectacles, while Aunt Prim sees the world quite differently with her eye-glasses. A peep through Aunt Prim's gold-rimmed orbs appears to have the effect of casting a little cloud over everything; of sprinkling all the sweet roses of life with drops of vinegar-dew.

This is Madge's first season out, and Aunt Prim will have enough to do in polishing down her boarding-school ways, and preventing her from shocking the fastidious world with her *outré* extravagances. Madge evidently has no genius for fashionable conventionalities; she opens her black eyes wide at everything new or strange; claps her little hands with delight when she is pleased; is a little thunder-storm of the blackest variety when she is angry; and, moreover, says just what she thinks to every-

body; which latter folly would surely amaze the philosopher who said that "words are intended to conceal our thoughts."

As for myself, two years in society are quite sufficient to cure one of all such nonsense, and I feel prepared to meet any event with the utmost *sang froid*. In fact, there is nothing like sailing through life with a placid air; nothing like preserving one's equanimity despite the fact that the world turns upside down every twenty-four hours. Aunt Prim herself is not more staid in her deportment than her "paragon niece," as she is pleased to call me.

And now that we are safely ensconced in a charming room which overlooks Congress Spring and its shady park, we have time to reflect upon the little journey we have just made, and to laugh again over its amusing incidents.

There was the boat crowded with pleasure-seekers; there was the pleasant-looking matron with five fair daughters; and there the haughty belle who smiled a sweet adieu to an admirer who requested her to think of him while she was gone, and, when the poor fellow had made his last bow, she turned to her companion with her beautiful lip curled in scorn, and exclaimed: "Think of him!

I guess I have something else to think of. What conceited beings these men are ! ”

There also was the elderly gentleman with two daughters, who created much amusement by his odd comments and remarks. The daughters were fashionably dressed girls, evidently just from boarding-school. Papa was just as evidently not accustomed to the polite usages of society, but had the air and look of a sea-faring man with plenty of money.

“ I declare,” said this *pater familias*, “ you gals are more trouble to me than all my money. Just as if York wasn’t good enough for you ; but you must go philandering off to Saratogy, just to make a show of those frillamagigs you’ve wasted a month over. I tell you what, you don’t fool your pa with this kind of nonsense much longer.”

A short pause.

“ Sarah Jane, where’s your gloves ? ”

“ In my pocket,” replies Sarah Jane.

“ That’s the best place for ’em, and Polly, if you’d just put those rats and mice you’ve tacked on to your head in the same place, you’d show that you had inherited some common-sense at least from me.”

As might be expected, poor Polly’s cheeks were

suffused with painful blushes at this unexpected disclosure of the falseness of her puffs and curls.

But young people nowadays are not overblessed with reverence, and so Polly soon recovered from her confusion, and gently replied :

“Now, pa, if you’d take out those teeth you bought at Dr. Hadden’s last week, you wouldn’t talk so *plainly*.”

Pa’s vivacity subsided at this, and he buried himself in his evening paper.

Aunt Prim managed to secure a state-room, while Madge and I were obliged to content ourselves with berths in the ladies’ cabin.

There were three in a tier—one for Madge, one for myself, and the third, which was the upper berth, was allotted to an enormously stout lady. The stout lady looked at her check which bore the number 25, and then at the berth which bore the same number, with evident dismay.

How was she to reach that elevated couch? It was too much to ask of any mortal of her ample proportions!

“Yours truly” having secured the berth below, looked at the stout lady also in a state of dismay. Good Heavens! Timber and upholstery are not equal to everything, and what if that berth should

give way beneath the fat lady, and bury "yours truly" in oblivion?

The mere thought of such a mishap caused a cold shudder. The only resource was to offer the fat lady the lower couch, which she gratefully accepted.

Now I cannot see why people object to upper berths. My advice is, to always get as near heaven as possible in this wicked world. In the upper berth you have at least five feet of breathing room above you, and can lie for hours looking dreamily out of the open window, admiring the ever-changing panorama of Nature, while your neighbor below, shut up in a good-sized coffin with a side plank taken out for air, becomes a prey to doleful dreams. Swiftly we glided past the Highlands covered with dark verdure, and looking weird and solemn in the moonlight. Past little towns and rural cities, built at the base of a mountain, or high up on some hill-side. Past quaint old castles, which carried one's thoughts far off to the poetic banks of the Rhine. Past many a spot renowned in legendary and historic lore—on, still on, we glided up the noble Hudson, which hurried by us to mingle its placid waters with the distant sea.

Every blue wave laughed and twinkled in the moonlight, sporting with the silvery rays like a gay

coquette with her lover. One by one the stars came out, but growing pale with envy before the glorious lustre of the full moon, they drew a misty veil of clouds over their faces, and left sweet Luna the undisputed Queen of Night.

The principal solace amid the discomforts of travelling, is to laugh at the lugubrious faces and woeful complaints of others.

It is so refreshing to one's tired senses, when roused from your dreams at the first peep of day by the bustle which announces that you have reached port, to emerge from your state-room with a disconsolate air, supremely miserable—with your eyes only half open and your head dizzy with the motion of the boat—it is so refreshing to look around you and remark that everybody else seems to be equally afflicted with yourself. One may soon forget his own troubles in making himself merry over others. Perhaps the most amusing affair of the morning was that of the stout old lady who had just seated herself at the breakfast table, and was about to partake of the savory viands before her, when lo! the thrilling cry of "all aboard" startled her sensitive nerves.

With a most pathetic look of despair she seized her umbrella, little bag and big bag, lap-dog, and sundry other parcels by far too numerous to men-

tion, and hastened as fast as her physical capacity would allow her to catch the train.

From the expression of that matron's face one might well have inferred that the little mishap of a "slip 'twixt the cup and the lip" is one of the most trying grievances in the world.

And so at last we reached the goal of our summer dreams—Saratoga. Sitting on the piazza and watching the throng that comes and goes, catching glimpses of well-remembered faces, clasping the hands of old friends lost sight of since last summer; all this is like the re-perusal of some beautiful half-forgotten story, or the realization of a fascinating dream.

The streets are gay with brilliant equipages and crowds of well-dressed people, who, having nothing else to do, laugh, and chat, and spend their money in the pleasantest manner possible.

The shoddyites have nearly all disappeared. One hears no longer the rustle of pretentious silks and satins at the breakfast table, nor are weary eyes diverted from the morning papers by the glitter of diamond necklaces and bracelets. Only the flashing of bright eyes is allowable at so early an hour in the morning—that is, if eyes can be bright that know no sleep until the "wee sma' hours" of the night have come.

II.

THE RIVER.

THE one thing about Saratoga which would doubtless prove the greatest attraction to a New Yorker, is that early in the season it is delightfully cool. Too cool perhaps for those delicate individuals who cannot endure a whiff of unadulterated fresh air—rheumatic old bachelors and fidgety old maids who aspire to romance upon the piazzas these lovely starlit nights, and yet who are forever haunted with a secret dread of the night air!

Even Miss Flimsy does not care to crush or hide her airy costume beneath a heavy wrap—and so she forsakes the piazza at an early hour for the gay ball-room, where one may whirl for hours in the giddy dance without expiring from the heat.

Perhaps we are not yet quite ready for Saratoga—for to enjoy a season at the Springs there is something more to be done than wardrobes to be replenished and trunks filled to their utmost. People who come here should be prepared to catch the inspi-

ration of the hour; free from all care, light-hearted, willing and eager to enjoy life—to sip the foam when at its whitest—to catch the bubble while yet the rainbow glistens upon it.

A heart that is ready for all this is ready for Saratoga. To be moved and swayed by the subtle charm which woos the world hither; to feel the Circean spell which throws a rose-tinted enchantment over all; to look upon life as a butterfly with golden wings, and to ask for no more—this is to enjoy life at a watering-place.

But the spell of the river, up which we sailed on our way hitherward, the beautiful, blue, flowing river, is yet upon us. The river, with its deep waters flowing onward to the sea, dark and dreamy with the night shadows upon it, and here and there twinkling with the many-colored watch lights, and the golden lamps which glitter like beacons on the shore; the river, with its long line of towering hills and mountains holding endless communion with the skies; its stern and frowning walls of rock; its groves and woods of ever-living green; its quiet towns lying low in the valleys; its picturesque homes nestled like eagles' nests far up amid the mountain's crags, and all these slumbering so peacefully, all wrapped in quiet dreams, half in the

shadow and half reflecting the light of the quiet stars which seem so very far away.

Can the Rhine, the far-famed, beautiful Rhine, with its crumbling castles, its pictured scenes of beauty, and its time-worn legends, more fully enthrall the heart and hold it captive with a wizard's spell than our own noble and picturesque Hudson? And thus, perhaps, it is the spell of the beautiful river which makes our first impression of Saratoga this summer very much like that of quaffing a glass of champagne after all the sparkle has departed.

Something of the old charm seems lacking; something of the old fascination gone.

Where are those who have made this fashionable resort so delightful in past seasons?

Where the bright eyes, the laughing lips, the interesting faces which once to look upon was to have a sweet memory of forever—the beautiful, the witty, and the gay, who last summer thronged the parlors and piazzas of Saratoga?

Ah, those we learn to love and those who love us glide, one by one, away from our sight, and new friendships are forever taking the places of the old, like the restless waves of the sea, which come and go, and are changing forever.

One peculiarity of Saratoga friendship is that amid the brilliancy of a watering-place life, new friendships catch the sun of love quicker and strengthen into warm attachments sooner than in the quieter, more shaded walks of existence.

But the people, ah! the people! To one who has few friends, there cannot be a lonelier place than this. To drift about, a solitary bark amid a sea of strange faces, is to know the bitterness of solitude.

In all nature there is no solitude, no feeling of desolation like that which sweeps over the lonely heart amid a throng of strangers.

The birds, the trees, the flowers, valleys and mountains, all assimilate, all harmonize with the heart of man—and no such feeling of loneliness steals into the soul as that which often comes to the solitary being in the great throng.

Life at Saratoga may well be compared to a bubble—a beautiful bubble with all the bright colors of the rainbow shifting over it; a bubble radiant with light and beauty, but a hollow bubble after all.

And how the world, like a little child at play, loves to amuse itself with bubbles—with hollow bubbles that burst in a flash of time, and leave an empty void in the place but a moment before radiant with sunlight!

III.

ON THE PIAZZA.

MUSIC in the morning inspires one to fresh activity; it incites to new energy; to noble impulses, and to lofty aims. If one could be always awakened from slumber by sounds sweet or melodious, the day would dawn so beautifully and so gently that care and grief would hardly venture to intrude; and if they did, could be easily banished.

Breakfast is over; and the band is playing inspiring music under the trees in the grove. The devotees of the various springs have returned from their daily pilgrimage, apparently refreshed and invigorated, for faith is able to work wonders; young belles appear in the most charming toilettes, and their bright eyes sparkle as mischievously under their coquettish little hats, or dart shy glances at you from beneath their pink or blue parasols, as though they knew nothing of late hours or the glare of gaslight.

Young gentlemen, faultlessly attired, with fresh

rose-buds in their buttonholes, and perhaps faded ones upon their breasts, renew the whispered compliments they uttered the evening before beneath the stars, or when whirling through the dance, under the glittering lights of the ball-room. Elderly ladies, with their faces discreetly veiled, and always carrying the inevitable morning parasol, chat pleasantly together, and make caustic remarks upon the scandalous flirtations of the previous evening, which had been indulged in by the frivolous young maidens of the day, and mourn over the degeneracy of the age.

But is not love and romance both beautiful and allowable in youth ?

And is old age itself quite exempt from the influence of the sly god Cupid ?

And is the mask of youth which old age endeavors in these " degenerate days " to wear, either beautiful or wise ?

If the fashionable young ladies of the present time would have shocked their feminine ancestors of long ago by their worldly ways, I am sure some of the fashionable old ladies of to-day would have frightened them out of their senses!—not by their natural, but by their *artificial*, comeliness !

This is one of the lessons one cannot help learning upon the piazza.

Another reflection is, that the evening is kindlier to poor humanity than the morning.

Looking well by gaslight, and looking well in the broad, unsparing light of day, are two different things.

But a rose is always a rose!—whether looking up to catch the warm beams of the morning sun, and drinking in its fervid rays with joy, or sleeping placidly in the moonlight, with the glittering dew-drops on its bosom.

So beauty is always beautiful, and gathers new charms from every hour.

But when Nature relies upon art to make her adorable, she must choose her lights and shadows. And the evening is kindlier than the morning.

The music is certainly charming—full of pathos and sentiment—now inspiring one's heart with gladness, and now soothing the soul with sweet melancholy.

Madge says that she would like to dance the polka-redowa with Fitz Hugh over the smooth walks of the grove, if no one were looking on. But I should object to that proceeding. So would Aunt Prim. That Madge is an incorrigible girl!

Little children, with their golden locks flying unfettered in the breeze, go skipping over the piazza,

keeping time to the inspiring strains of the music with their tiny feet.

Young belles, arm in arm, walk up and down together, rehearsing the conquests of the last evening, and ransacking their dear little brains for new ideas concerning the toilettes of to-night. People who imagine that fashionable young ladies have nothing to do, are decidedly mistaken. Their profession is heart breaking, and they pursue it with the most indomitable zeal. Young gentlemen, I find, are also given to the same pursuit. We have a New York exquisite here just now, who changes his apparel five times a day! Just think of the precious hours this would-be dazzling youth spends before the mirror! His wardrobe is inexhaustible, and comprises everything from black velvet suits to those of spotless white linen.

I think he is in love. I think so every time I see him promenading this piazza, twirling his fanciful walking-stick in his small, white fingers. But I am quite sure that this young man is hopelessly in love with himself.

Fitz Hugh declares that he was sent up here by some enterprising tailor's establishment.

One day's study of human nature at Saratoga can-

not fail to be both instructive and amusing, and that study may all be pursued on the piazza.

In the morning, between ten and twelve o'clock, it is thronged with people.

Reading is an impossibility at this hour. Nothing more than skimming over the pages of a newspaper can be accomplished in the way of literature. As the throng passes and repasses, the great book of Human Life is wide open before you, and every new face is a fresh and curious page to be read.

Reading faces is like reading a book in a foreign tongue with which we are but partially acquainted. We catch a general idea of the author's meaning, but lose many a pearl which is hidden in the vast ocean of thought.

From twelve o'clock until four in the afternoon, the piazza is nearly deserted. The noonday *siesta*, embroidery, and dinner intervene. After dinner the band again assembles—this time on the piazza. Ever since the days of Orpheus has music wielded a magic charm over the hearts of mortals, luring them whither it will; and from four to five, after dinner, is a witching hour at Saratoga. Every one is in the best of spirits; the music is charming—now full of mirth and gayety, and now plaintive with pathos and sentiment. There is little prome-

nading, and every seat is occupied. Little coteries are formed, and sprightly conversations are carried on, through which *bon mots* flash in and out like meteors darting through a summer sky.

One may take in at a glance people of almost every clime. Distinguished men of letters ; eminent judges and lawyers ; military heroes, who wear their laurels gracefully ; divines, who are not too near heaven to enjoy the charms of good society on earth ; men of wit and men of fashion ; and men who are neither witty, nor learned, nor fashionable, but who were expressly created to fill up the loop-holes of society intended for *bored*.

There are also beautiful and fashionable women. Women elegantly attired ; women of mind and culture ; and women with pretty faces, whose brains are as destitute of ideas as those of a well-dressed doll. There are women of fashion, whose whole souls revolve alternately around a "love of a bonnet" or a *parure* of diamonds ; and women of noble aims and purposes, whose minds are not utterly absorbed in the trivialities of dress. There are wives who have not an idea beyond the *ipse dixit* of their august (or foolish) husbands ; and wives who are at last opening their eyes to the fact that they were not created to be the mere puppets and slaves of man.

All these make up a little world, complete in itself, in which one may while the hours delightfully away.

When the music ceases, it is *en règle* to drive to the Lake, or wherever pleasure dictates, or to go down to the springs, to drink the waters with the last sunbeams sparkling upon them ; and, after that, all is quiet until eight in the evening. Then the ladies emerge from their rooms in the full splendor of evening toilettes ; and the glittering of rare jewels rivals the flashing of bright eyes. Faces which are plain and ordinary enough in the daytime seem to have stolen an added charm from the eventide, as though the parting day had left its blessing upon them !

The parlors are filled with a gayly-dressed and animated throng. Costly robes gleam softly beneath the radiance of many lamps, and rare gems which sparkle on every side reflect the rays of light with a liquid fire.

Leaving the crowded parlors for the piazza, we find the throng there also. But the soft light of the stars blends with the glitter of the lamps, and the young new moon droops low in the west. A brilliant aurora flashes fitfully across the northern sky.

No hour upon the piazza is like to this. There is

music ; but it is the sound of the piano touched by skilful fingers, or the voice of song which comes floating from the parlor. There is any amount of flirtation and love-making going on. The hour has a witchery in it, and few hearts can resist the spell. Even the elderly people recall faint memories of the time when they, too, went romancing under the stars.

With pleasant chatting and soft laughter ; with the fluttering of fans and the flashing of bright eyes ; with whispered words of love which only the evening zephyr can catch ; under the starlight and the moonlight, blended with the soft glimmer of the lamps—the evening glides swiftly away.

And when it is over, the piazza is once more deserted. There is heard no more the sound of laughter or of song ; the lamps are put out ; and the stars, which now look solemn and weird, shed a cold radiance over all. So the day ends at Saratoga.

IV.

JANUARY AND MAY.

THE people who spend the most money at Saratoga are the old men with young wives. As there is no end to the caprices of an old man's darling, the most lavish toilettes are displayed to a gaping world by these foolish butterflies of fashion, who have renounced love and romance forever, and sold themselves for gold to the highest bidder in Vanity Fair.

One of these couples attracts particular attention. The husband is said to be enormously wealthy, and no lady in Saratoga surpasses his wife in the elegance of her toilettes. Her diamonds are of the first water, and sparkle as profusely upon her lovely person as dew-drops showered upon a rose. In return for all the luxuries with which her husband's wealth provides her, this young wife entertains him with a ceaseless prattling. Her glances are turned neither to the right nor to the left, but always rest dutifully upon her liege lord. Indeed, she could not do otherwise if she wished, for his admiring eyes are constantly fixed upon her. He is evidently amused and

flattered with her constant attention and charming vivacity, and she has only to say, "My dear!" to have the wealth of the Indies laid at her feet.

And how people do stare at this bride of half a hundred millions! Verily we moderns are worse than the heathen idolators of old. We do not build our idols of solid gold as did they; we care not what the idol itself may be, so that it is covered with gold, we fall down and worship it!

But faugh! Madge says that she would rather bury all his diamonds and riches in the bottom of the sea than be compelled to gaze upon and to entertain that wizen-faced old man all day.

Another representative of the January and May marriage, is Richard Lambda, a youthful veteran of seventy, with a wife of twenty. Viewed at a distance—for sake of the enchantment, you know—Mr. Richard Lambda might pass for forty-five. But Aunt Prim says that he was a grown man when she was a "wee, toddling girl in pinafores!" (Imagine Aunt Prim ever toddling!) But this gentleman is marvellously gotten up. His hair and whiskers are of raven blackness, and his teeth as white as pearls. A golden eye-glass dangles from his vest, and his toilette is always unexceptionable.

And what matters it if, in reality, he is bald, tooth-

less, almost sightless, brainless, and deaf? *N'importe tout cela!* Does he not own the finest house in Gotham? And if he can scarcely walk, can he not ride in a gilded coach behind the fleetest of steeds?

And is not a heap of gold dollars better than a split sixpence—even though the sixpence was broken in a love troth? So at least decided his young wife, who is said to have married this man to please her father, and almost broke her heart at renouncing a younger and dearer lover.

We have any number of brides, however, with young husbands. One of them sits near me now, elegantly attired, and dividing her attention between the newly wedded husband and a pet lap-dog! Really the lap-dog appears to possess the largest share of its mistress' affection!

In whatever costume this fair bride chooses to array herself, the lap-dog is decked with a velvet ribbon of the same color as her dress. The husband also displays a cravat of the same hue. What a consultation there must be every morning about different shades of color, in this happy family of three!

Cousin Madge views all the newly married couples with curious eyes; and she detests that lap-dog. I cannot refrain from whispering, *sub rosa*—for what woman could ever yet keep a secret, or

what man either?—that Cousin Madge expects to be married this fall. And the way she snubs all the young gentlemen who are inclined to proffer her their attentions is simply terrific.

The most elegant man in the world would scarcely be able to win a second thought from her, just now.

Lovers are all as blind as bats. They see no one, and heed no one, except the beloved, whom they invest with every fancied charm.

A lover's life is like a dream, through which the people of the world move like phantoms, and the only real existence is that of the chosen one, who is worshipped as a divinity, and whose image fills heart and mind to the utter exclusion of every one else.

Heigho! talking about lovers, if Fitz Hugh were only here! But that incomparable youth has returned to town, and three long days must elapse ere we may hope once more to behold him.

The very thought overwhelms me with despair. Not a single exquisite here can compare with Fitz Hugh.

The remembrance of that absent but unforgotten youth dispels all my sweet fancies, and I turn for consolation to contemplate a lock of his lovely hair. Perhaps you think I wear it upon my heart? What nonsense! I shall send it to a chemist. I really

would like to know if the mellowness of his brain has anything to do with the golden tint of his hair—or if the color is all owing to the barber's skill. I scorn to be curious—but this is merely a matter of science. Fitz Hugh is quite proud of his golden locks and cerulean eyes, deepened in tint by the cerulean cravat he generally wears. And, *entre nous*, how charming this fascinating youth appeared on the morning he left, dressed in a coat of black velvet, white vest, white pantaloons, a love of a white hat resting upon his golden curls, and with the inevitable blue cravat, so becoming to a blonde! Ah! Fitz Hugh *is* elegant! But this is *entre nous*!

V.

MAKING HAY.

O THAT Madge! that terrible, incorrigible girl! Madge has been down in the park a-haying! Not “making hay while the sun shines,” in the manner which young ladies of position are expected to do, during a season at Saratoga, by securing an eligible match—no—Miss Madge has put an end to all such hopes by her mad-cap caprices. This morning, arrayed in my most charming toilette, and accompanied by the elegant Fitz Hugh—who has just returned, I walked down to Congress Park. There we saw a party of hay-makers tossing up the grass. It all looked very romantic when viewed from a distance, but, as we drew nearer, whom should we recognize among the merry hay-makers but Madge and that wild Belle Arden from Chicago, with Mr. Cecil and two or three other gentlemen. Oh dear! I thought I should faint; Madge’s hat was lying upon the grass—her hair was flying at random, and her cheeks were such a vulgar red!

It was too shocking! They were all busily en-

gaged in tossing the hay, as though they thought it fine fun ; and then, to cap all, when I looked up in Fitz Hugh's face, expecting to find a sneer upon his aristocratic features, he was gazing at Madge, and laughingly declared he had never seen her look so handsome before ! The stupid fellow really looked as though he wished to join the party ! I was just upon the point of fainting, to prevent that catastrophe, when I saw Aunt Prim and Bachelor Grumpy approaching us. When the former looked in the face of her paragon niece, she knew that something was wrong. Unable to speak, I turned my eyes in speechless agony toward the hay-makers. Aunt Prim followed my glance.

“ Yes, my dear, they are having a merry time of it,” she said, blandly. I remained mute with surprise, forgetting that Aunt Prim's eyesight is not so good as it might be, when Grumpy suddenly cried out :

“ Why, bless my soul, if Madge is not making hay ! ”

“ Madge ! My dear sir, is Madge there ! ” exclaimed Aunt Prim, now thoroughly horror-stricken.

“ Of course she is, and that sly little minx from the West, and half a dozen others. Well, it's jolly fun to see those fellows making hay with lavender

kids upon their hands!" and Mr. Bachelor Grumpy laughed heartily.

Here I forgot Madge entirely, it was so amusing to watch Aunt Prim. I knew that she was boiling with rage to think that any one belonging to *our* family would frolic so—but then there was Bachelor Grumpy at her side, and what could she do?

Just nothing; and so she smiled with her lips, while her eyes darted forked lightnings; she vented her anger upon her poor shawl and parasol, the latter she shook nervously, and the former she twitched until I feared it would fall in pieces. Oh, dear, I came near dying with suppressed laughter! Aunt Prim prudently concluded to bide her time, and did not call Madge, but passed on with Bachelor Grumpy.

This gentleman is an old acquaintance who has recently arrived in Saratoga. Is it the bewitching serenity of Aunt Prim's features which has lured him hither? or can it be the glistening of her gold, or the sparkling waters of the Springs? I know not; but at any rate, he is "your most devoted" to my paragon aunt, wherever we go. And it is really quite delightful, for this excellent man absorbs so much of Aunt Prim's attention, that she sometimes quite forgets "the girls."

Just before the dinner-hour, in walked Miss Madge, swinging her hat in her hand; and the saucy girl commenced to sing—

“ Under my hat of barley-straw,
Charlie gave me a kiss!
Nobody heard, and nobody saw,
Do not take it amiss—
'Twas only a kiss ! ”

Only a kiss ! What could the girl mean ? Here Aunt Prim entered and gave her such a lecture ! Madge listened demurely at first ; then, walking to the open window which looks out upon the piazza, she turned and said :

“ Oh don't, Auntie ! Mr. Grumpy is smoking right under the window ! ”

Aunt Prim flounced angrily out of the room. The word Grumpy had the desired effect, and ended the lecture, and Madge laughed as though it were capital fun.

There was a concert in the Opera House this evening. Of course I was there, and Fitz Hugh beside me. And that charming fellow wore the loveliest cravat ! I complimented him upon the color, it was *so* becoming.

“ Oh, yes, blue is the color for a blonde, you know,” he said, stroking his moustache. Speaking

of a blonde, did he mean me or himself, I wonder ? I have heard it whispered that Fitz Hugh's golden locks are dyed. I cannot believe it, however, although Fannie Arlington declares she met him in Paris two winters ago, and that his hair was then as brown as brown could be. She says nothing of his inimitable moustache ; I suppose it was not visible then.

The Opera House fronts upon a beautiful grove, and what can be more charming than wandering through this sylvan retreat by moonlight, hanging upon Fitz Hugh's arm, with the stars looking softly down through the trees, while from the concert room near by float delicious strains of music.

“ Speechless, and lost in ecstacy,
Birds and the stars above me,
I did not hear, I did not see.
Ah me ! I thought that she did love me.”

Bah ! let not every romantic youth imagine that a maiden who looks upon him with melting eyes, as they walk together beneath the trees in the moonlight, is in love with him. Possibly she is thinking of some absent lover ; or probably she meditates whether the dew-drops which glisten like jewels in her hair will not rob her tresses of their crimp, or the stiffness from the white muslin, which used to be

called a simple dress, but is now so be-puffed and be-ruffled that it is simple no longer. Neither is its wearer. Talk about the wisdom of our grandmothers! One "Girl of the Period" would astonish and eclipse twenty of those dear ancient dames. It would not do, however, to let Aunt Prim see that last remark, for she is fond of expressing her contempt for the "ignorance of young people," and the "shocking deterioration of the age!"

VI.

THE WIDOW DASH.

THE Widow Dash has arrived. Sixteen Saratoga trunks ; five oblong ones, resembling so many coffins, in which lie buried at full length her ball dresses ; twenty-five bandboxes ; a parrot in a gilded cage ; two lap-dogs ; an elegant equipage with a span of full-blooded bays ; a maid, a coachman, and a footman ; all these are in the train of this wonderful widow. And goodness knows how much more, since this list does not include the *et ceteras*.

Saratoga has been in a flutter of excitement for three days over this fascinating widow. The young men are harder than ever now to be suited in the choice of a cravat, and twirl their incipient moustaches for hours before the mirror, in the hope of seeing them grow—and the elderly creatures, poor souls ! get themselves up “regardless”—and all this for a widow ! What miserable taste !

You remember the Widow Dash ? Six years ago she was the belle of the *beau monde* of Fifth Avenue. She married old Latitude and Longitude—



THE WIDOW DASH.



that's what we schoolgirls called him, for there was no limit to the latitude of his purse—and, as for his life, it had already attained *such a longitude*. However, ignoring the longitude in consideration of the latitude, Miss Fairy Beautiful wedded Father Graybeard. And he, good old soul, growing tired of the follies and vexations of Vanity Fair, departed this life with a good grace, leaving to his fashionable young wife the bulk of his splendid fortune.

How considerate of him ! Such a piece of good nature is not to be expected of every venerable and wealthy husband ! But the poor, dear man has undoubtedly his reward ; and moreover he has escaped the earthly martyrdom of travelling in charge of the widow's baggage, which would be enough to distract any live masculine. And then the bills which this charming widow runs up would surely suffice to frighten any man out of his senses. Twelve thousand dollars are scarcely sufficient to cover the expenses of her short season at Saratoga.

Ah, well, if husbands must die, it is a fine thing to be a rich widow !

It is now two years since old Latitude took his departure for a better sphere, and since that interesting—not to say disinterested event on his part—his widow has maintained a proper seclusion, and

devoted herself assiduously to the study of woman-kind.

Do not imagine for a moment that she has the least idea of taking the platform in defence of woman's rights, or that she has resolved in her mind any grand scheme for the amelioration of the troubles of her sex. Not at all. She knows her rights, and knows how to obtain them also in the most charming way in the world.

If one only knows how, the *genus homo* is the easiest *genus* to manage on the face of the earth. The great art consists in concealing the management altogether. Just let these masculine bipeds catch a glimpse of the whip and the reins, and straightway they are stubborn as mules !

But stand smilingly before them, with your "gypsy" hat full of fresh, green grass, and the dear creatures will amble along beautifully.

Don't I know ? Haven't I Fitz Hugh already in training ? But to return to the widow. During these two years she has devoted her golden moments to the precious study of herself. Every art known to ancient and modern times for attaining the perfection of female loveliness, she has explored ; from long centuries ago, when Roman ladies sat upon the house-tops to bleach their hair beneath Italy's burn-

ing sun, up to the present day, when modern belles transform their tresses into gold by some mysterious process of the hair-dresser's skill.

Every advantage to be derived from dress has been carefully pondered ; every look, every motion, every smile well studied ; and now, having reached the acme of loveliness and perfection, in her study of womankind, the Widow Dash reappears in society, to dazzle it with far more than her pristine glory.

She enters as queen, into the sphere for which she has fitted herself—that of conquering *mankind* !

This is the age of progression, and it is quite evident that woman must advance as well as man. If man shuts the gates, and debars her from advancing in *his* way, let him be sure that she will find a path of her own, and circumvent him at last. Talk about the perplexities which harass and worry a man's brain ! I would not undertake to teach the smartest man alive to master the infinite trivialities that make up the sum of a fashionable woman's life.

It is all very well for a man, after years of labor, to get one grand idea safely lodged in his cranium, to turn "professional" of some kind, and then rest upon his oars, content to spend the remainder of his life in developing that one idea. But just let him

attempt to fathom the intricacies of the mind and heart of a woman like the Widow Dash, and he will find himself beyond his depths in no time. Law and logic would be nothing to that !

I plainly see trouble in the distance. Bachelor Grumpy is swerving from his allegiance, and Aunt Prim is disturbed in mind. A shadow, as yet no larger than that flung from a bird's wing, darkens her "love's young dream." Ever since this fair widow's arrival, Grumpy has acted like a man in a maze, or rather like one who has lost his senses. Madge says the widow has bewitched half the men here into lunacy. And she has such a horror of idiotic men !

"Leaves have their time to fall."

And so have love-smitten youths ! that is, upon their knees, before the object of their devotions. But who wishes to see a man on his knees at all times, or all men paying homage to the same woman ? If Fitz Hugh is sometimes slightly bewildered, who can blame him ? If that irresistible youth is too much infatuated already to fall into this wily widow's net, so much the better for him ! Young men, beware of the widows !

The attentions which those odious lap-dogs, and

that screeching parrot, which belong to the Widow Dash, receive from our Saratoga exquisites, is simply terrific ! As much adulation and homage are offered them as though they were Saratoga belles. And how complacently the Widow Dash contemplates all this ! She says but little. She has more faith in the eloquence of looks than of words. She smiles, or sighs ;—flutters her fan, the better to display her white hands glittering with gems ;—darts destructive glances from her soft eyes at some adorer ;—blushes slightly, then drops her orbs languidly—and the intoxicated admirer, poor, foolish butterfly that he is ! is ready to fall in the dust at her feet, utterly regardless of the consequent ruin to his white inexpressibles ! Oh, dear ! what fools these men are ! Still, out of commiseration for these poor, benighted, deluded creatures, I repeat—to all men, both young and old—beware of the Saratoga widow !

Aunt Prim is waxing wrathful. In fact she has been wrathful ever since this morning, which we spent on the “grand stand” watching the races. Of course the inevitable widow was there ; and Bachelor Grumpy was *so* attentive ;—to the widow, not to Aunt Prim ! Aunt Prim would expire at the mere idea of attending a race. The widow vanquished her admirer in a bet—and Aunt Prim has a proper

horror of betting. She would not make a bet, even to secure Bachelor Grumpy for life. This is all very well, but still what a disagreeable dnenra Aunt Prim is when she is angry !

VII.

LE BEAU MONDE.

WAS there ever a gayer place than Saratoga is this season? No sooner has one wave of pleasure died softly away than

“Another as bright and as shining comes on.”

It is one constant whirl of excitement from early morning far into the “wee sma’” hours of the night. One lives almost in a dream—a beautiful, poet’s dream—through which is ever floating strains of delicious music, the perfume of flowers, the voices of sweet singers, the flashing of bright eyes, soft glances, and whispered tones—the gleaming of rare jewels, and the rustling of costly robes. All these blend harmoniously together to make life beautiful, and to blot all care and sorrow from the heart.

People who come here to pass only a day or two find themselves detained as if by a magical spell—a charm which they are loth to break; and so they linger, until days glide into weeks, and the gay season is over, and the memory of Saratoga pleas-

ures follows one far into the dreary winter, like the scent of the dead summer roses.

Every one is light-hearted, every one is happy. One would think that life were all sunshine, that we had only to revel in the warm, golden beams, and to pluck flowers that never concealed a thorn !

The hotels are crowded with people ; the streets are brilliant with gayly dressed ladies who promenade without hats, as though in a drawing-room, and shade their fair faces from the glowing kisses of the sun by parasols of delicate tints. Elegant carriages, with fine horses, are driven up and down Broadway by sable Jehus in gorgeous livery. The stores are filled with the latest New York fashions and novelties, venders of quack medicines amuse the throng with comic songs and witty sayings ; tables spread with Indian wares attract the lovers of curiosities ; while those who are fond of the antique, hover longingly over a display of rich Oriental jewelry, bracelets and rings, which possess the charm of wafting one's thoughts far over the sea to sunny Algiers, to sweet Georgian vales, or where floats the perfume of roses which bloom in Cashmere. Promenading the Saratogian Broadway is like wandering through a great fancy fair, where one never tires of seeing or hearing. All kinds of people continually

pass you ; the beautiful and the ugly ; the man of intellect, and the be-whiskered fop whose brain has long since run to hair ; distinguished clergymen, poets, and artists ; illustrious authors, and celebrated musicians ; dignified senators and affable Congressmen ; women of culture and refinement ; women of birth and breeding ; men who have not a soul above buttons, and women who exist only to array themselves ; beautiful young ladies, and foolish old ones, who are neither young nor beautiful, but who refuse to resign themselves gracefully to the custody of old Father Time, and deck themselves with all the affectations of dress and manners of sweet sixteen.

“ Oh ! wad some power the giftie gie us,
To see ourselves as ithers see us ! ”

There goes a woman promenading the piazza, the sight of whom is enough to draw the tears from one's eyes ; she is at least seventy-five years old ; yet so be-powdered, be-painted, be-frizzled, that it is to be doubted if she recognizes her own self in the mirror. Her dress is always youthful ; this morning it is a white swiss, covered with puffs and ruffles. A bright-colored sash is fastened at her waist. Two long, dark curls float airily down her back, while the

rest of her auburn (?) hair is arranged in braids and puffs. Diamonds glisten in her thin ears, and upon her withered hands, which are also profusely powdered or covered with enamelling. To see this woman at the distance of a few feet, one might suppose her to be very young ; but when she approaches, oh, horror ! a shudder creeps over you, and you feel like fleeing before the skeleton which looks out upon you behind the thick layers of enamel, arrayed in the height of fashion. To complete her toilette, she carries a little black-and-tan terrier under her arm, which looks at you with its sharp black eyes, and shows its small white teeth menacingly. I never look upon that terrier but I think of a ghoul haunting a grave, or the spirit of Eblis keeping guard over a doomed soul, in the shape of a pampered lap-dog ! And I never see this painted skeleton dance, for dance she does, but I fancy I hear the rattling of dry bones !

In pleasing contrast to this horrid mockery of old age, this disdaining the years which should bring honor and wisdom to all, is Mrs. Bêta, the wife of Congressman Bêta, of New York. This dear old lady is always simply dressed in black, and wears her own gray hair arranged in becoming little puffs. Her manners are the simplest and most unaffected

in the world, and one may look upon her and learn how to grow old gracefully !

One cannot help asking, while looking into the faces of some of the elderly ladies who spend the summer at Saratoga, what has become of the dear old ladies of the olden time ? The sweet, pale face, from which the roses had fled, but left their sweetness still ; the silvered locks which crowned the furrowed brow with a halo of glory ; the soft, low voice which touched the heart, because its every tone seemed a plaint for the dear ones who had “ gone before ; ” the simple attire of black silk, and the soft ruffles of white lace ; where is now this vision of sweet womanhood, which no one could fail to love and venerate ? Alas ! the dowagers who come to renew their youth at the springs of Saratoga are not of this class ! Old age forgets that it has a poetry of its own, and makes a sad mistake in putting on the mask of youth.

Saratoga is a veritable “ School for Scandal.” It is amusing and at the same time saddening to hear the remarks made upon every side. One almost dreads to cross the room when one hears the insidious comments made upon every passer-by. But, after all, a woman need have little fear for herself— it is only her toilette which is discussed.

Is it not a wretched, questionable taste when the world ranks the wardrobe as of more importance than the individual?

Dresses, not brains, are at a premium in Saratoga.

I hate to hear a man discussing a lady's dress. I am apt to fancy that his soul is small enough to be tucked under the hem of a handkerchief.

People who call themselves gentlemen and ladies, will stand on the piazzas or in the drawing-room, and eagerly watching the promenaders who approach, make their caustic remarks and comments as freely, as though they were gazing upon a menagerie.

Did you ever know that butterflies buzz? You should spend an hour of a bright evening in the parlor at Saratoga; such a continued buzzing, chattering, and laughing of merry people congregated together was never heard before! No assembly of busy bees could hope to rival these butterflies of fashion, who swarm under the brilliant chandeliers, and spread their gaudy wings.

If you draw near to the various little coteries, you will hear people who are sparkling with jewels rioting in bad grammar and empty ideas; you will see aldermen who can scarcely write their own

names, and shoddy people who endeavor to conceal their ignorance with thick layers of gold.

They are dancing the German this morning in the ball-room, and Madge is whirling through its mazes with Fitz Hugh. The witching strains of the music float in through my window, and if my letter be incoherent, it is because my pen is inspired with the spirit of the dance, and will persist in keeping time.

To-morrow night we are to have a grand masquerade at our hotel; of which I think Madge entertains "great expectations." That girl never will sober down into a staid old woman, if she lives to be fifty! She is continually upsetting the equilibrium of Aunt Prim's good-temper by her vagaries, and Aunt Prim's temper is none of the best. I have advised the dear old lady to take a few additional glasses of Congress water, which she firmly believes to be a cure for all evils.

VIII.

THE MASQUERADE.

THE morning after a ball is not apt to be particularly charming, and the people we found especially brilliant and witty beneath the gaslight, are often stupid enough the next day. The belles of the evening, who bewildered your fancy, and entangled your heart, and still lingered in your dreams after the soft good-nights were uttered, wear a different guise the next morning. Everybody looks sleepy and bored. Everybody except Aunt Prim, who sits erect in her chair upon the piazza reading the morning paper, and denouncing "that artful Napoleon!" I am glad that Napoleon just now engrosses her anathemas, since Madge and I would certainly come in for our bitter share, did the good lady dream that we, her nieces, attended a masquerade!

Cousin Madge sits near, shading her face with a pink parasol, with her sweet lips buried in a fresh water-lily which she holds in her hand, and her beautiful eyes half closed, for they are heavy with

slumber. Madge is weary after the past night's frolic, and is doing penance now by ignoring the admiring glances of those that pass her, and giving all her thoughts to her absent lover. Ah! "there's nothing half so sweet in life, as love's young dream!"

If men were to die of their vanity, how frightful would be the mortality among them!

If Madge chances to glance twice at a pair of patent-leather boots, or a curled moustache which passes her, the individual who owns said boots or moustache is sure to catch the twinkle in her eye, and immediately pluming his feathers with gratified vanity, he promenades up and down for her especial benefit. And all the time Madge is probably thinking of some one else—longing for her dinner—or viewing her wardrobe with her mind's eye, and pondering in what toilette she may appear next. If she notice the arrogant stare of the man at all, it is only to laugh at his conceit, or to walk away to avoid his impertinent glance.

Not a presentable, unmarried man in Saratoga but imagines that every pretty or homely girl is laying siege to his heart, and that every match-making mamma is endeavoring to weave her toils around him. He fancies that he has only to ask and

that the maiden whom he may honor with his choice will drop into his arms.

But to the masquerade. Among the characters represented were patriotic young ladies in costumes of red, white, and blue ; flower girls, and queens of the night ; cavaliers, troubadours, sultans, and clowns in abundance. And there was a pretentious young gentleman in a court suit of white silk and gold lace, who evidently had not received the order of the "Garter," since his white hose were full of wrinkles !

Oh, dear ! what a blessing it would be to one's sense of the beautiful, if some people would always wear masks. There was a Highlander present, whose fine, stately figure elicited much admiration from the fair sex, but who took off his mask and revealed a shad-faced, middle-aged man whom no one would ever dream of falling in love with.

And Madge and I wearied ourselves with laughing at Fitz Hugh, who went raving over a head of golden curls, but whose rhapsodies were suddenly brought to dismay, when at the mystic hour of twelve, the masks were removed, and the poor fellow's inamorata proved to be a jolly old lady of sixty ! Poor Fitz Hugh ! He was glum and sarcastic enough all the rest of the evening, and

indulged in the most cynical remarks about the deceitfulness of women. During the evening I took especial pains to draw his attention to a beautiful brunette, just budding into womanhood, and evidently destined to the naughty mission of breaking hearts. But he was too much absorbed in that splendid mesh of golden curls, to heed the brunette. I have no patience with a man who falls in love with a wig!

I shall take Fitz Hugh to the hair-dresser's window some day, and proceed to enlighten him. The ball-room was crowded, and magnificent toilettes and blazing jewels were as plentiful as roses in June. But there is an old adage which says, "Fine feathers make fine birds;" and if all the trappings of wealth were laid aside, Saratoga could boast of but little beauty.

Rouge and powder, and all the other accessories to a fashionable woman's toilette, may go a long way toward adding fancied charms to those who have sad lack of them. But if these apparently blooming roses were transplanted from the hot-bed of fashion, and deprived of their jewels, satins, and laces, of the rouge, powder, switches and curls, your roses would suddenly vanish, and not even the charm of a daffy-down-dilly remain.

And even when genuine beauty passes by, perfect features, and complexions which owe nothing to art, how often does the face express nothing but insipidity. One sees plenty of bright eyes, luxuriant tresses, and pretty shoulders; but alas! the soul which might inspire the heart to lasting admiration is too often wanting. And what is vapid, expressionless beauty worth? Every young lady who is bent on making conquests, might easily spare a few of the precious hours wasted upon fashionable follies, and devote them to cultivating her mind. For the charms she may thus acquire are imperishable, and will outlive her youth and loveliness.

An elderly lady of intelligence and culture has always warm-hearted admirers and friends, while a frivolous, empty-headed young belle, with no charm save a pretty face, is sure to sink into a stupid old woman.

The prettiest fancy dresses at the ball were worn by the children. Little fairies, enveloped in clouds of white tulle, flitted around the room, and boys of tender years, in powdered wigs and satin small clothes, danced and promenaded with the nymphs in tulle, with all the airs and graces of young gentlemen of a larger growth.

And how the little faces sparkled with glee!

There were Scotch laddies and lassies, gentle and fair as the bonnie lovers who inspired the tender muse of Robert Burns ; there were little Normandy peasants, with their high-pointed caps resting upon thick tresses bright with youth's sunshine ; also pretty Swiss shepherdesses with simple crooks in their tiny hands, and Italian banditti whose faces were so utterly devoid of wickedness as to induce one to believe in the traditional good qualities and innate nobleness of Robin Hood and others of his ilk ; little fellows in blue and white, called themselves "jolly tars," and declared their invincible devotion to the stars and stripes ; and there were soldiers who never dreamed of scars, and little girls who commenced their belle-ship thus early by wearing dresses trimmed with tiny silver bells, which tinkled musically as their wearers went floating through the dance.

But it is quite evident that the sober American is not gifted with that vivacity, that froth and sparkle of merriment which overspreads the surface of a French or Italian life, like the foam upon a glass of champagne—and therefore he cannot enter into the wild, capricious, fantastic spirit of the masquerade which constitutes its only charm.

Where is the pleasure of attending a masked ball,

when three-fourths of the assemblage are dressed in their everyday silks and broadcloth ?

How can one imagine for a moment, that he lives in the primitive days of America, as he promenades the ball-room with a swarthy, black-haired Pocahontas leaning upon his arm, and is at the same time continually bowing to the "Girl of the Period," arrayed in the most fashionable modern attire ?

And where is the pleasure of talking with a masked Scotchman who wears the tartan plaid with a manly grace, but who has never read a line of Robert Burns', and knows absolutely nothing of the heroic Wallace ?

The fop and the fool, and the natural Satans who go about dressed in black and red, but who can never hope to attain to the dignity of a Mephistopheles, are perhaps the best-represented characters at a modern masquerade. It is so easy for people to throw off the mask they wear all their lives for the deception of the world, to don a hideous guise and be themselves for a few brief hours !

IX.

FORTUNE-HUNTERS.

AN interesting specimen of the human biped is the fortune-hunter. We have them in Saratoga in abundance. Some create a sensation as counts; some as wealthy Southerners, or patriotic Cubans; and others come from—Heaven only knows where—and cut a dash with their fine figures, fine manners, and elegant dress. The fortune-hunter is indefatigable in learning family histories. He knows the “prospects” of every noticeable damsel in society. He regards every young lady in the light of a probable heiress, counts her jewels, and knows as well as a married man—perhaps better—the value of her laces and other finery. He knows just how many heirs there are to the wealth of each paterfamilias, and can guess with the accuracy of a life-insurance agent, as to the probable longevity of such “paternal.” He addresses himself rather to the mammas than to the daughters—which evinces a shrewd knowledge of human nature. He trusts to his good looks and stylish air to attract the suscep-

tible hearts of the younger ladies, while he appears utterly indifferent to them, and all the time he is, like the cunning spider, waiting for his prey. The unlucky heiress who chances at last to fall into his grasp, will never be able to say that he took especial pains to win her, for he will weave his web so skillfully that she will blindly walk therein, seemingly of her own sweet accord.

The fortune-hunter is a cool speculator, who considers every dollar he spends at Saratoga, or Newport, or in arranging his own person in the latest style, as a good investment, which shall some day bring him splendid returns. I believe that he would make love to Aunt Prim herself, not caring whether his heiress is young or old, so that she has plenty of money. But our worthy aunt is far too shrewd to be lured by his wiles.

Just at present, one of these individuals who is eagerly looking out for a wife who will be able to take care of him, (it is to be hoped that she will belong to the Woman's Rights party, and will see that he attends to household affairs, while she attends to the affairs of the nation !) has his eyes fixed admiringly upon the Goldbug family.

First, there is Papa Goldbug—who really seems to be gifted as was King Midas of olden time,

for everything he touches is turned to precious gold.

He has been most emphatically, a lucky man. No one knows his pedigree ; it is to be doubted if he knows it himself—though rumor has it that he commenced life as a rag-seller, and his father may have been a rag-picker in the very streets through which his costly equipages now roll. It matters not ; he has risen from his rags to purple and fine linen, and society now smiles upon him, and holds out her hand to lift him yet higher ; for society is partial to purple and fine linen. And yet, if still in the midst of his rags, who would notice Papa Goldbug ?

Ah ! society would hold its perfumed handkerchief to its fastidious nose, and pass by on the other side, wishing devoutly that the earth were swept of its *scum* ! What homage we yield to purple and fine linen ! while often regardless of the God-life—blind to the divinity which is enshrined in every human creature. We worship the mortal, and ignore the immortal.

If Papa Goldbug be worthy of the flattering attentions he now receives, was he not worthy of the same kind consideration years ago, when he was struggling hard for the success which he has won ? If worthy then, he is deserving now ; if not, then

those who honor him, do honor to his gold, not to the man!

“The rank is but the guinea’s stamp,
The man’s the gowd for a’ that.”

Mamma Goldbug is a dressy, fussy little woman, who revels in silks, and satins, and velvets all day long, scorning, in her newly acquired wealth, to wrap herself in commoner materials. She can *afford* to wear silk always, and she wishes people to know it. She mixes up real and imitation laces in a marvellous way, from sheer inability to tell the difference between the two.

She wears gloves usually, for her little fat hands are like twin cabbage roses, and their ruddy hue causes a world of vexation to the good little woman. She tries hard, poor soul, to live up to her position, but she is a martyr, nevertheless, and her life is a sacrifice to fashion.

Mamma Goldbug would be far happier queening it over a snug little dairy, with plenty of cows, and chickens, and even pigs, to look after, while she vigorously flourished the broom or the mop—than she is, sitting here in state, dressed to the last extremity of fashion, loaded with finery, and striving to imitate the airs and graces of the fashionable people she sees around her.

But we have yet to mention the jewel for which the fortune-hunter is striving. And this is the little Goldbug; a pretty, pert young lady of eighteen, who possesses a great deal of the shrewdness which enabled her father to rise in life, and who adapts herself far more easily to the ways of the *beau monde* than does her martyred mamma. The little Goldbug appears in the morning daintily attired in a becoming white dress, with a little hat upon her head. I have heard gentlemen sneer at the uselessness of a lady's hat. But how easy it is to be mistaken! Under the little Goldbug's chapeau is tucked away a great quantity of curl-papers and dozens of crimping pins which it would never do to display, and which are twisted so tightly that the poor thing can scarcely close her eyes. I think she sleeps, rabbit-like, with one eye open! So she is a martyr, too, to the tyrant Fashion!—and, moreover, ladies' hats *are* useful. The little Goldbug wishes to shine, like the stars, at night, and so when the night comes, she emerges gloriously, minus the hat and curl-papers. And the charming, saucy, independent, and more than all, wealthy little Goldbug is quite a belle, and has a train of admirers as long as the train of a comet. The only blemish to the little Goldbug's beauty is an odd little

nose, which in vulgar life would be pronounced a decided pug, but which her fashionable admirers designate as piquantly *retroussé*. Mamma Goldbug, with her unsophisticated heart, would fall an easy prey to the fortune-hunter, were she a widow. And as it is, she is only too apt to prove a good ally in winning her daughter's affection. But that young lady is not so easily to be hoodwinked. She has already refused a half dozen offers, and is in no hurry to rush into matrimony. So this tall and elegant fortune-hunter, who wears a moustache and carries a cane, may woo mamma as assiduously as he can, but it is doubtful whether the sly little Goldbug will ever be caught in his web.

We had a delightful drive yesterday to the Lake. We rowed across the water by moonlight and drank our fill of romance. Aunt Prim and Bachelor Grumpy sat in the stern of the boat—Aunt Prim placing the parasol between them for propriety's sake—Madge and her latest adorer sat in the centre, and that dear fellow, Fitz Hugh, and myself in the bow of the boat. The stars were all twinkling brightly in the sky, and the moon seemed to laugh as she mirrored herself in the little waves, and remembered how nicely she eclipsed the sun the other day. We all follow the laws of nature; and what

man would expect to shine when a beautiful woman passed by?

Madge's new admirer is a dusky Cuban with magnificent dark eyes, the very beau ideal of a romantic lover. He is all enthusiasm, and all patriotism. He has a string of names as long as his pedigree, commencing with Luis Francisco. As we glided over the water, he sang a little Spanish love-ditty to which the oars kept time, dipping softly into the lake, and lifting the waves up in the starlight, to let them fall again in myriads of glittering drops.

Poor Grumpy, overcome by the bewitching intoxication of the hour, looked ready to fall at once upon his knees before Aunt Prim, to declare his devotion, in utter forgetfulness of the Widow Dash. And, under the circumstances, my paragon aunt might have accepted his adoration, and with downcast eyes and blushing cheeks might have vowed, by the sweet stars and the moon, to henceforth keep poor Grumpy's buttons in order! Yes, that's what a man expects when he gets married. He gets a wife to keep his buttons in order.

Fitz Hugh does not wear buttons; he wears diamond studs, and surely, no one could mind looking after them!

Love-making is of course apropos to a moonlight

night upon a lake. When I find time, I am going to give Fitz Hugh a few lessons in the art. At present he is chiefly absorbed in himself—and there is no need of being in haste, since among so many beauties at Saratoga, he might become too proficient.

And one finds but little extra time at a watering-place. Talk about work! Think of dressing five times a day; of riding, walking, or boating, flying from one amusement to another all day long—and then, when the day is over, of dancing until one or two o'clock in the morning.

If all this is not work, I should like to know what is?

X.

THE "GOOD OLD TIMES."

THE day commences at Saratoga with a visit to the Springs ; and, whoever stands beside these ever-living fountains, watching the crowds of people that come and go, cannot but remember how many have come hither during the past century, from the time when Washington visited this place and thought of purchasing it, up to the present day, when pilgrims come from all parts of the world to drink of the sparkling waters.

And how many feet which have come down to the bubbling spring have passed long since from earth forever !

But still the waters gush and bubble just as fresh, just as bright and sparkling as ever, like the little brook that sang—

“ And men may come and men may go,
But I flow on forever.”

Aunt Prim declares that of all the springs there is none so refreshing, none whose taste is so pleasant, as the Hathorn.

And really it would seem from her enthusiasm

about this spring that the dear old lady had found a veritable Castalian font in the land of the setting sun, which would bring back the bloom of her youth and cause her to live forever. Madge says she is not troubled with rheumatics, refuses to taste of the waters at all, and thinks the best use the springs could be put to, would be to drown troublesome beaux in them! And this wicked girl visits them for the sole purpose of laughing at the wry faces of the novices as they set down their half-emptied glasses with a most comical grimace. We had a brilliant ball last night at the Congress. All the wit, beauty, elegance, and fashion in Saratoga were there. The evening commenced with a grand masquerade and fancy dress ball for the little folks. They entered with the greatest zest and spirit into the affair. And, although the children in society are nowadays all miniature gentlemen and ladies, aping the airs and affectations of their elders, the little belles and beaux who figured at this ball were evidently brimming over with glee. And it did one's heart good to see their bright eyes sparkle with all the happiness of childhood, as they went flying through the dance with little feet that scarcely touched the floor, and fairy ringlets fluttering in the waves of melody which flowed from Bernstein's band.

Like so many sprites from fairy land were the children, dressed in beautiful and fantastic garb, their silvery laughter ringing musically out and mingling with the chime of tiny silver bells, which, fastened on their costumes, kept time as they danced.

We could not help wishing to be a child again while gazing upon this brilliant scene. The children's ball ended at 10.30, and then the floor was filled with the grown-up people, women elegantly dressed, and men well-known to wealth and fame.

Every one seemed to be in their best mood, but the free, guileless mirth of the children was lacking.

The foam had simmered away from the full goblet of life. There was no taste of the dregs at the bottom of the cup; but pleasure in fashionable life soon loses its novelty, and every joy is welcomed without enthusiasm.

There was, of course, at this ball a fine display of elegant toilettes. The richest silks, point laces and diamonds, were by far too common to merit any special attention. And, alas! the more extravagant the beautiful dresses, the costlier and more abundant the jewels, the oftener was the wearer of all these utterly dependent upon outward finery, upon mere ostentatious wealth, for winning

recognition in the world. The blaze of brilliant diamonds cannot conceal the lack of those inner jewels of the soul, which shine out like stars, growing ever brighter as the night-time deepens; the rustle of costly silks cannot hide the frivolity of speech which jars so often upon the ear when mingling in the throng; nor all the wealth of the Indies atone for the poverty of human nature, when lacking in all that makes life truly rich and worth living for.

It is amusing sometimes to hear the dear little old ladies and their elderly escorts lamenting, with hearts that refuse to be comforted, the good old days when the United States Hotel existed in Saratoga, and where congregated all the bright particular stars of society. But if those days were really to return, it is doubtful if they would be found more attractive, or even half so replete with comfort and pleasure as are those of the present time. Think, my dear friend with the silvery hair, and the fond heart filled with longings for joys which can never return—think that the world is every day growing wiser and better, and that it is you who cling so tenaciously to the golden joys of the past, that you often neglect to taste the sweeter pleasures of the present.

Only remember, at the “good old United States,”

the weary stairs you had to climb ; the small, uncomfortable rooms to which you resigned yourself perhaps without a murmur ; when now, if you wish to go from the lowest to the highest floor of these immense hotels, you have only to ring the bell, and a beautiful coach, gilded and freseoed, with cushions covered with velvet, awaits your bidding, and you are carried to your own floor without the slightest effort of your own.

Is not this splendid invention of the elevator the realization of Cinderella's fairy coach, which she summoned at will in the days of yore ?

And then the rooms you have—no longer small and crowded, but large, airy, and beautifully furnished—plenty of attention without paying a fee for every morsel you taste, and so on, my dear aged friend, through a number of advantages which the present has over the past, and which, perhaps, I could better describe had I myself lived in the "good old times" you so lament.

There is one relic of the past here at Saratoga to whom every patriotic heart must turn with loving veneration and fondness. This is the widow of a General of revolutionary fame, a dear, charming old lady, who rejoices truly in a delightful old age, surrounded by hosts of devoted friends.

How few lives, like hers, glide beautifully and serenely down the stream of life ! Long may she live to clasp the hands of those who seek to do her homage ; to be a link between the dark days of our country's early struggles and the glorious golden future which is spread out before her.

There is a great deal said, and undoubtedly with truth, about feminine folly as displayed in extravagance of dress at watering-places, but folly should not always be represented as a woman.

Does it become a man to carry a lady's parasol ; to wear a long veil ; or to sport a feather in his hat ?

Surely, if we are encroaching upon man's sphere, he is becoming jealous of the little accessories women are fond of using to heighten their claims to beauty.

Since this seems to be the case, I would advise my dear sisters to award these ambitious men the ornamental (?) chignon they have discarded, that for lack of brains the fashionable exquisite may cultivate his hair.

What has become of the chignon ?

Ask of the rag-men who go their dreary rounds and jangle its dirge with bells all out of tune, as they "shovel them in, shovel them in !"

Surely here is a theme fit to inspire the heart

and pen of some enthusiastic poet, who has allowed his heart to be ensnared, alas! too oft, by false alluring curls.

The chignon is happily among the things which are no more, but false eyebrows have come in.

Eyebrows which are so constructed as to bristle with indignation when a lover with an empty purse dares to plead his cause, and yet droop with pitying air when love, whose coffers are full of gold, breathes forth its plaint at beauty's feet. These wonderful eyebrows are said to possess the merit of hastening proposals.

Madge says she will never patronize them for that very reason alone, since courtship is the sweetest time in life, and should be prolonged indefinitely.

Lovers are charming—but husbands and bears are synonymous!

Naughty Madge! She is having a desperate flirtation with a handsome Colonel, and, peeping into her mirror this morning, was thrown into hysterics by discovering that she had a horrid pimple on the tip of her nose.

I wonder if the Colonel has bravery enough to overlook this unlucky, and decidedly *malapropos* sortie against Madge's bewitching beauty.

I really must lay aside my pen, and go down to

the piazza and see. There is nothing in the world so invincible as a *woman's* curiosity, it is said, and I repeat the adage, adding—except a *man's*.

Nevertheless, Aunt Prim is taking a nap, and it is plainly my duty to chaperone Miss Madge.

And who knows what Fitz Hugh is about while I sit here scribbling?

XI.

IN THE PARK.

JUST as I told you in my last, I found that wayward Madge flirting desperately upon the piazza with the Colonel.

There was a look of thrilling disappointment upon the faces of the two, however, which I at first attributed to my sudden appearance; but I soon found that Madge and the Colonel had been down to take a ramble in the Park, and lo! they were denied admittance. Now it is well known that the gentle deer roam freely over the velvety lawn of the Park; but just at this time one of these soft-eyed, amiable creatures is shedding his horns, and refuses to allow any one to approach him. It is thought that his temper has been spoiled by the example set him by the capricious belles and intractable youths who are wont to ramble through the park. However this may be, the park was closed to the public, and a grim policeman stationed at the entrance, who "rose to explain" probably

much oftener than was agreeable to him, and the lordly deer was left "monarch of all he surveyed."

This is the reason that Madge and the Colonel did not enjoy the ramble through this Arcadian grove which they had anticipated.

But to-day—the irascible young deer having been placed in durance vile, until he can learn to appreciate the aristocracy of Saratoga society and deport himself becomingly—to-day we had a delightful ramble in this same park.

And what a charming spot it is! How green and smooth the sward, how majestic the tall forest trees, clad in ever-living green; how cool and inviting its shaded, sequestered nooks, its green, velvety banks, its dark, romantic dells!

Ah, yes, all this is truly delightful, and affords a charming taste of rural pleasures after mingling in the gay world at the hotel.

But, alas! for "the slip 'twixt the cup and the lip," scarcely have you advanced on the smooth, hard walk, under the shadow of the first tree, when you are warned by a printed placard, "Do not touch the shrubbery!"

If you have intended to gather a few green leaves to form a wreath for your hat, or a sprig of ever-green to place in your button-hole as a souvenir of

Saratoga, you are doomed to be disappointed ; for you are instantly confronted with "Do not walk on the grass."

Just as though people who have grown weary from travelling for years over hot and hard pavements would not luxuriate in treading once more the green carpet of Nature, fresh and beautiful as ever, and bringing back the sweet memories of childhood's days.

Well, there still remained the gently sloping banks, covered with sparse verdure. Madge and the Colonel evidently fancied that they might rest in one of these sequestered spots and have a little chat all by themselves, with nobody but the squirrels and birds for eaves-droppers.

But no! a peremptory order to "Keep off the bank" loomed up at their very feet.

Fitz Hugh said that in the face of such determined opposition to a fellow's enjoying himself, he was inclined to do something desperate, and would endeavor to hug one of the marble statues which stood so silent and grim above us ; but he should object to being horrified by a sepulchral voice exclaiming in his ear, "Let me alone!"

Fitz Hugh and "yours truly" not being given to sentiment, didn't mind, you will perceive, the pro-

hibitions of the park ; but then it was *so* hard upon poor Madge and the Colonel.

There is just *one* seat in all this extensively cultivated wilderness, upon which two people are allowed to sit together.

That is, to sit near each other, for all the other seats are so arranged as to place you about ten feet from some one to whom you would perhaps like to *whisper*.

No need of their putting up a placard with—"Don't flirt here"—in this park, for could anything be more suggestive of such a command than these seats, which have the air of defying each other ?

It was quite evident that one pair of youthful lovers looked forward with longing eyes and beating hearts to that one seat—and lo ! when we arrived there who should be occupying the self-same seat but Bachelor Grumpy and Aunt Prim !

It was too much ! In fact, it was rather an embarrassing affair on all sides, since Aunt Prim had given out that she was going to *take a nap* ; and besides, the dear old lady does not look with favorable eyes upon the Colonel, which, of course, only makes him the more precious in Madge's eyes.

That girl is surely afflicted with brass buttons on the brain.

Not far from this one solitary lovers' seat, is a small circle of ground, with a few old trees upon it, so old that their verdure has nearly all disappeared, and there remains only a crown of withered leaves upon their tall tops; and here there is a sign put up, which informs the children that they can "play upon the grass within the circle."

How thankful the dear children ought to be for this inestimable privilege! But I should like to see them gather ten spears of real, genuine grass in that circle.

To roll and tumble about the green lawns in true childish fashion in the park, to chase the bright-eyed squirrels over the banks, and frolic with the deer, would undoubtedly do the little folks who come here to spend the season a world of good. But no! Young America dresses like his papa, carries a cane, wears a watch, and sports a diamond ring. What does he care for rolling in the grass or making mud pies?

His little sister is dressed as elaborately as her stately mamma; and what with her parasol, her fan, and gloves, has no hands at liberty to pull either flowers or weeds. Neither has she the faintest idea in the world of the meaning of a genuine romp.

To listen to a group of these youngsters conversing, would inspire you with the idea that you were in the midst of a party of elderly dwarfs.

Aunt Prim attributes the serenity of her nerves to the plentiful drinking of the spring waters. Madge and I fancy that Bachelor Grumpy's recent arrival has something to do with it. But, being discreet young ladies, we have never hinted our opinions to Aunt P.

We have a real live count and countess at our hotel.

"But, la!" said an old lady this morning. "I don't see but they look just like other folks; dress like other folks; and the only good sense I've seen about them is, that when the count swears, he spares the English language, and uses his native tongue."



GEYSER SPRING, SARATOGA.

XII.

THE GEYSER SPRING.

THERE is one fact which must always be a source of pathetic regret to any one spending the season at Saratoga, and that is that the human hand is unluckily so constructed as to allow only *eight* fingers for the display of diamond rings!

It is really painful to notice how much of gold, and what a number of gems, one poor finger is required to bear.

Now, if Dame Fashion would only bring thumbs into vogue as ring-fingers, that they also might blaze with jewels, what an inestimable relief it would be to those ladies who not only wear huge cluster rings upon *every* finger, but also interperse these with some half dozen or more golden circlets, ornamented with emeralds, rubies, etc., etc.

Or, since a pride in costly jewels seems to be the ruling passion in so many hearts, why not resign the nose to be adorned with gems as well as the ears?

It would be quite as Christian a custom, and

would certainly offer one more chance to dazzle the eyes of society with brilliancy.

Alas, for the days when gems were worn, not for ornament alone, but for the occult meaning which flashed in their lambent fires.

There is not a spark of sentiment in most of the jewels which blaze in Saratoga. They serve merely to enhance beauty, and as tokens of ostentatious wealth.

How many ladies watch the glow in their diamonds to learn of the truth or falseness of the giver? How many dream that the opal, with its rainbow tints, brings ill-luck to the wearer? How many feel the charmed spell which the emerald sheds around it; or see the heart-drops of some loved one in the blood-red ruby?

Those who wear jewels right royally, wear them not for their beauty and value alone, but also for the deep significance they bear.

Yesterday we had a charming drive to the Geyser Spring. Aunt Prim was far too dignified to ride in the public stage, and as she rolled along in state over the sandy country road in her elegant barouche, complacent as a full-blown sunflower, with Bachelor Grumpy seated beside her, she expatiated upon the beauty of the scenery.

Probably she meant the bachelor, as she had not her glasses on, and therefore her eyes were unavailable for looking beyond the barouche.

Madge and I preferred the stage with the rest of our party. What a crowd there was in that stage!

There was the *Fat Boy*, who took up *so* much room, and *La Petite*, who was arrayed in such an elaborately fluted and be-ruffled dress that she was in constant horror lest the *Fat Boy* should sit *too close*, and Madge, who didn't care a snap for the ruffles on her dress, had no thought for the enormous sash she wore, and therefore rumbled it terribly.

But what else could be expected of a young lady, who has gilt buttons on the brain, and who gives all her precious time to flirting with the Colonel?

The Geyser Spring is one of the greatest curiosities in Saratoga. The water comes spouting up from the earth, rising to a height of thirty or forty feet, and, breaking into a misty spray, falls in millions of jewelled drops, with a musical, tinkling sound, back to the fount again.

One jet of this water is thrown into a large crystal globe, where it surges and boils without ceasing—a veritable witches' caldron.

Madge suggests that this water is kept boiling by the subterranean fires at which the Gnomes, the

Trolls, and all those funny little underground folks are cooking their dinners.

The Fat Boy laughed himself into a shower of perspiration at this odd fancy of Madge's, which made Fitz Hugh terribly nervous. Fitz Hugh never laughs—he only dawns an aristocratic smile upon you!

After we had exhausted our admiration upon the spouting water, snuffed up the carbonic acid gas which arises from its depths, quaffed each other's happiness from its sparkling goblets, and inspected the vast number of broken bottles this vivacious fluid destroys before it submits to the loss of its freedom—after all this, the man who attends the spring, struck by the imposing presence of the Fat Boy, the faultless propriety of *La Petite's* costume, the sparkling eyes of Miss Madge, and the aristocratic air of the company generally, pathetically begged us to sit a few moments for our pictures.

Unthinking of coming martyrdom, we complied. We were seated just back of the silvery falling mist of the Spring, told that it would require about five minutes to take a good picture, and warned not to move. Oh, what an impostor that man was! For twenty long minutes at least we sat there, immovable as statues.

The weather was frightfully warm; streams of glistening drops rolled down the poor Fat Boy's face, and a fly alighted upon the tip of his nose, and refused to spread his wings for flight; and yet the Fat Boy was forbidden to move!

Aunt Prim sat upright and rigid as an icicle, and Bachelor Grumpy, unused to keeping quiet, nervously twitched his toes, because, as he said afterward, he "thought they wouldn't *show in the picture*," which unfortunate remark absolutely horrified Aunt Prim.

Minute after minute rolled away, and every second seemed an hour, until we, who had sat down smiling, became as sombre and grave as so many Egyptian mummies.

Never will you catch our party sitting for pictures again at Geyser Spring.

This spouting water was recently discovered, and is claimed to possess more medicinal properties than any other Spring. The taste of the water is very much like that of the Hathorn Spring, and is generally liked.

A short distance from the Geyser is the White Sulphur Spring.

Why it should be called *white* is a mystery, since the water has a yellowish tint, and tastes as though

Pluto and his imps had been wont to slake their thirst at the stream before it found its way upward to the sunlight. The water is remarkably clear.

These two springs are located in a romantic wood; near by is a pretty fall of foam-crested water, and a stream beneath as clear and limpid as a mirror, spanned by two slender bridges which creaked wofully as the Fat Boy passed over, and afforded a charming opportunity for Aunt Prim to display a little nervousness, and to cling closely to her escort's arm.

Crossing that bridge by moonlight might induce the Bachelor to propose.

I'd like to mention it to Aunt P., but she would overpower me with her wrath.

What a fall from the sublime to the ridiculous!

The Count and Countess just arrived from Paris, whom all the *beau monde* were dying to see, have opened a jeweller's shop here on Broadway.

Think of it, foreign nobility catering to the wants of a republic!

Sic transit gloria mundi!

XIII.

AFTER DINNER.

THE greatest flirts in Saratoga are the married men—especially those who have left their faithful wives at home.

“Go to the sea-side, dear, or to some watering-place, and don’t mind me. I’ll stay at home, but you need recreation from business; so go.”

The obedient husband complies, and generally contrives to enjoy himself, according to the wishes of his absent spouse.

But unfortunately all the Benedicts do not belong to the class whose wives are aware of their whereabouts.

Next to the married men—(married women have too much conscience usually to flirt)—the widows are pronounced to be the nearest *au fait* in the art of heart-breaking. There is nothing like a gay widow for creating a sensation wherever she appears. And the widows usually have no remorse for the pangs which pierce the hearts of their adorers. Having been themselves the victims of some man’s caprices,

they solace their loneliness by revenging themselves upon the masculine sex in general by the most wicked coquetry.

“Samivel, beware of the vidders!” said the anxious parent to his son, and all “Samivels” would perhaps do well to follow this advice.

The sultriness of the dog days is upon us here as well as in the far-off Gotham, but there is ever a cool, delightful breeze to be enjoyed upon the piazzas, or a safe retreat from the fervid sun to be found in the quiet shadows of the Park.

And there are always the cold, invigorating waters of the springs, free to all, where every one may come to slake his thirst, and fancy or believe, that some magic power lurks in the sparkling waters which may restore the lost bloom of youth, bring health and rosiness to the pale invalid, and pour inspiration into the weary brain of the thinker.

If there be really any merit in mineral waters of inestimable value to man, it surely ought to be found in these cool, bubbling fountains.

It may be written down as a fact, that very many elderly men and women, *habitués* of Saratoga, speak volumes in themselves of the marvellous efficacy of the Spring waters, since in no other place seems ever to be gathered so many “immense” men

and women of advanced years as here. This is a subject of general remark, and many a new arrival of a modern giant or giantess forces us to ask, Are we returning to the days of the Titans?

One of the pleasantest hours of the day is after dinner, when the people gather upon the piazza of Congress Hall to listen to the music of the band. This is one of the features of the place. A regular programme is published every day, and throngs of people come from the neighboring hotels to listen.

It is truly an hour for the *dolce far niente*, when one may indulge in the most fanciful day-dreams, sitting under the shade of a parasol or of a broad-brimmed hat, and linking golden thoughts of love and romance together with dulcet strains of melody.

How gently floats love's young and ardent dream upon the waves of song!

It would be cruel to tell of all the endless flirtations which are carried on under the influence of music upon the piazza.

Madge's black eyes have almost annihilated me already for mentioning her and the Colonel, and so, reluctantly, I forbear to speak of hearts forever ensnared or cruelly broken, while the delicious music throws its weird spell over all.

The favorite employment of the ladies at this time is working in bright-colored worsteds. What monuments of patience and industry they are !

The poor dears ! How quietly they accept the compliments bestowed upon their skill in weaving the gorgeous flowers and birds with brilliant plumage, which adorn the bit of canvas upon which they work.

It is rather wicked to open the eyes of their admiring adorers to the fact that these elaborate patterns are all wrought in the fancy stores, and Miss Industry sets about the simple task of filling up the groundwork !

The usual amount of labor performed by these industrious ladies after dinner may be estimated as averaging three stitches a day !

The old ladies here are as gay and youthful as the unmarried belles.

Youth may be expected to go the round of fashionable dissipation with unfaded cheeks, but it is wonderful to see how the old ladies mingle in all the festivities of Saratoga, and apparently enjoy themselves with the gayest of the gay.

Well may the youthful belle look to her laurels, for who so elaborately dressed, so be-puffed, be-ruffled, be-ribboned, be-jewelled, as the rich old

lady who comes to pass the season at Saratoga? If she be a beaming, good-natured widow, what scores of ancient adorers she counts in her train! If married, she becomes the centre of a bevy of elderly dames who admire and envy her dresses, her carriage, her jewels, and flatter her into the belief that she is looking "just as young as ever."

Aunt Prim has reformed—that is, she now consents to add propriety to the ball-room by her august presence, while last year she would have filled the air with thunder-clouds by her frowns in such a scene.

But who could object to a ball when the band plays such enchanting music? So bewitching a charm might tempt even the most scrupulous to join in the naughty waltz, and even Aunt Prim sometimes forgets to frown on Madge as she goes whirling by upon the arm of some adorer.

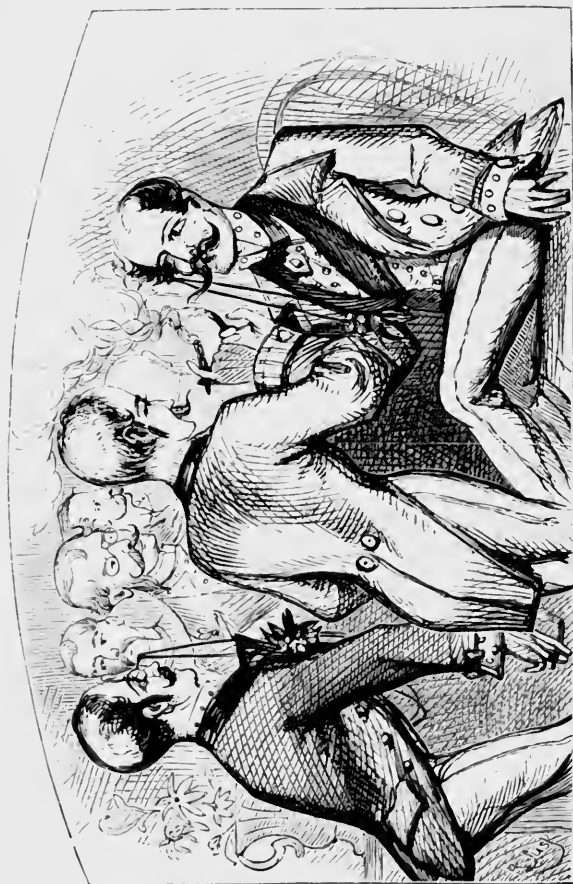
It may easily be believed that "music hath charms to sooth the savage breast," if it can soften the prejudices of Aunt Prim. Not that the dear old lady is at all *savage*, but then she is so terribly set in her ways.

And such people do sometimes possess the faculty of making other people decidedly uncomfortable.

For how can one be expected to shine when there is always a thunder-cloud gathering?

There is a strange mixture of piety and frivolity at the Springs. While hundreds of people come expressly to dance and make merry every passing hour, just as many others come to point out the wickedness and folly of worldly pleasures, and the fearful brevity of time. You may leave the crowded parlor, filled with a brilliant throng of richly dressed women and courtly men of the world, where the glitter of the lamps, the hum of many voices, the merry laugh, the innocent jest, and the soft tones of music stealing in from the ball-room, all conspire to lend a witching charm to the hour, and to make every one happy within himself; and just a little way up the street, not five minutes' walk, you may enter a church just as crowded as the brilliant drawing-room you have left, and there you will be told that all worldly pleasures are sinful; that the awful day of judgment approaches, and that all should flee from the wrath to come. But when the hour of worship is over, many of these church-goers return to the hotels and mingle with the wicked world they have just heard denounced, without apparently the least fear of corruption from "evil communications."





ARRAYED FOR THE BALL.

XIV.

ADONIS AT THE BALL.

THE young gentlemen visiting Saratoga think of holding a meeting for the purpose of demanding their *rights*.

A great deal of dissatisfaction has been occasioned among these fashionable youths from the fact that they have appeared at every evening hop and ball of the season in the most elaborate attire, and yet not the slightest mention of their appearance has been made in the papers.

If young ladies complain that they have not been "noticed" in print, what shall this army of indignant young men say at this shameful neglect of them?

In order that this state of things shall exist no more, and that wounded vanity may be soothed, we will attempt to describe "a few of the toilettes worn" by the gentlemen present at the last grand ball.

Madge has agreed to furnish a few notes.

Fitz Hugh says that his name is not to be men-

tioned, therefore we leave to fancy the task of portraying the appearance of this charming youth upon this particular occasion. Let it suffice to say that Fitz Hugh is always adorable.

Mr. Snifkins, a keen young lawyer from the South, was tastefully dressed in a claw-hammer coat, lavender pantaloons, lavender necktie, patent-leather boots, and his imposing forehead was unconcealed by an excess of hair. Yellow moustache, decidedly *en train*, gracefully drooping two inches over his lips.

Don Carlos Louis Pietro Valnaseda y de Castro, a tall young Spaniard with a *distingué* air, wore a black frock coat, light pantaloons, white necktie, and his mass of black hair brushed upright, *à la Pompadour*.

Madge was much impressed by his appearance, and thought she would like to have a flirtation with this dark-eyed youth, but Miss Airs said he was too fierce, and that she would be absolutely afraid of him.

Fitzaddle was as gushing as ever, in a new swallow-tail, black inexpressibles, heavenly-blue cravat, side-whiskers, and moustache dressed with elaborate care. Bald on the crown of his head.

Young Gingersnap caused a flutter of admiration

among a bevy of belles as he entered the room, bringing the perfumed spices of Araby with him, and presenting the most faultless toilette of the evening. Black, swallow-tailed coat—French swallow, not American—black double-perpendiculars, white vest, inimitable linen, diamond solitaire studs, and cravat of white point-lace. Hair parted in the middle ; ambrosial curls arranged in profusion upon each side. White kids.

Gingersnap is said to be the handsomest man in New York. Of course he is one of the “reigning” beaux of Saratoga. It is estimated that he has broken at least a thousand tender hearts during this season.

The poor dears ! It is not yet certain which has most captivated them, the ambrosial curls or the diamond solitaires.

Mr. Limberflap seemed to be the next favorite with the young ladies, being a pale, melancholy-looking youth, addicted to writing verses, and also perfectly versed in the art of making compliments. His general character may perhaps be best described as being slightly *enthused*. Limberflap wears eye-glasses, and has met with a sad loss of hair.

In fact, the excess of bald heads and weak eyes

among the young men who visit Saratoga is no doubt to be attributed to the overflow of ideas and the great mental labor performed by them.

Claw-hammer coats and bald heads may be safely said to be a distinguishing feature of every fashionable ball.

As we have not time at present to particularize further as to masculine toilettes at the ball, we will only mention a few names of those present :

Mr. Goldfinch, the "catch" of the season, whose father revels in gold mines, etc.; Mr. Adolphus Swantree, who flushes his cheeks with paint, and powders his hair upon full-dress occasions; Judge Darling, who has been twenty years to Saratoga in search of a rich wife, and has not as yet found her. Poor fellow! How strange that no one is willing to become "the old man's Darling!"

Fitz Hugh has conceived a horrid idea. He talks of having the back of his head shaved, since nearly every young man in fashionable life has a bald spot upon the top of his head. In fact, a young man is scarcely considered eligible, unless he has lost his hair and wears eye-glasses—these being received as almost indisputable evidence that he has always moved in the best society.

Now that we have paid due homage to masculine

finery, and have fairly represented Adonis at the ball, we turn our thoughts to the fairer sex, and to the marvellous gait which is now in vogue with our belles. But are we able to adequately describe this latest acquirement in this fine art of walking? Alas! our pen falters, and our courage fails before the arduous task.

What young lady can, for one moment, imagine that she appears *graceful* as she moves up and down the long piazza with the *Saratoga wriggle*?

The old ladies and the children are the only feminines who deign to walk naturally. The young belle, as she promenades, draws a long train behind her, this train being surmounted by a bewildering arrangement of puffs, ruffles, etc., styled a *panier*; and resting upon all this, is a bright-colored sash of marvellous width. Now this almost indescribable confusion of dry-goods is twitched, first to the right, then to the left; then it receives a gentle shake, very like to that which an old hen gives in settling her ruffled feathers! And this, as near as I can convey any idea of it, is the *Saratoga wriggle*!

With her head erect, her body bent forward, her little feet tilted up in dainty slippers with heels three inches high, the Saratoga belle ambulates up

and down the piazza, now smiling, and now frowning upon her crowd of admirers, who do their best to escape being tripped up in the folds of her long train.

Ah, me! I wonder if they succeed as well in escaping the entanglement of her bewildering charms?

I have to keep a sharp lookout upon Fitz Hugh! I should be sorry to see the dear fellow so egregiously taken in, as he might be, did I not kindly play the duenna over him.

If any young man is indulging himself with fond dreams of marrying one of these fashionable beauties, I would advise him not to be rash, but to invest in a large doll, which he may dress in rich silks, and decorate with costly gems; may furnish with curls, braids, "switches," and "rats," paint and powder, slippers, fans, and gloves *ad infinitum*, and set it up in his heart to adore!

I think he would find his doll quite as much of a companion, and certainly a less expensive one, than his fair Saratoga belle would prove herself to be.





MISS AIRS.

XV.

MISS AIRS.

WE had a new *divertissement* in Saratoga last evening. The gas suddenly went out, and the thousands of people assembled here were left, to their great dismay, in the dark. The ladies were busily engaged in preparing for the grand ball announced for that evening, and great was the bewilderment of hair-dressers and ladies' maids, to say nothing of the disappointment of their fair mistresses. The ball, of course, was postponed, and everybody clamored for the "Saratoga Dip."

The "Dip" soon appeared, in the shape of innumerable candles which cast a dim, mysterious light through the great parlors, and the vast halls became the scene of many a ghostly terror, since there was nothing to relieve the grim darkness, save now and then a sable waiter appearing far in the distance bearing a twinkling taper, his great eyes rolling horribly and his white apron fluttering in the gloom like the garb of a ghost.

In the parlors the young people, and, I dare say,

the old, also, improved the opportunity for carrying on sly flirtations, and so great was the confusion that the Colonel came very near hugging Aunt Prim in the dark instead of Miss Madge. It was amusing to hear the excuses and apologies offered as soon as the lights appeared. The untimely failure of the gas, after all, afforded a great fund of amusement to those people who are inclined to look cheerfully upon the bright side of even a tallow dip. A "shadow dance" was improvised in the parlor as being exceedingly *apropos* to the occasion. The presence of an English nobleman created quite a flutter among the belles.

Madge snubbed the Colonel dreadfully when she captured the "live lord," and walked away with him to try the effect of Republican eyes in conquering an English aristocrat.

How she succeeded I am unable to say, but she says he's "nice," and just as good as though he were not a lord. I must not omit to mention among the distinguished people who attended the last ball, the presence of Miss Airs, and Mr. and Mrs. Puffy.

Miss Airs, as is her wont, appeared in a most elaborate toilette. This, the pen of a graphic writer might easily describe, but were I asked to mention one-half of the infinite number of arts and

wiles, of frowns and smiles, of studied graces and endless caprices, with which Miss Airs contrives to captivate her adorers, I should expire upon the spot.

And then her walk, as she promenaded around the ball-room, the “observed of all observers!”

The Grecian Bend has passed away; but what name shall be given to the new deformity which foolish women attach to their backs to impart what they consider style to their costume?

Truly the camel has some excuse for wearing a *hump*, since from it he gains both sustenance and strength to support him through long journeys; but of what use is the monstrous *hump* which Miss Airs considers as indispensable to a full-dress toilette, except it be a *vade mecum* of feeding foolish pride?

With face and neck both powdered and painted; with hair frizzled to the last degree of the *coiffeur's* art; with shoulders raised and brought forward; with body inclined to an obtuse angle, the better to follow an obtuse head; with *panier* so arranged as to extend two feet in the rear over a court train which sweeps the floor, Miss Airs, leaning upon the arm of her dear Addlepate, sets forth for a promenade.

For long, mortal hours has she practised before

her mirror, and now witness the triumph of her skill in the art of walking.

The right foot is placed forward—then follows a halt—then the left is brought suddenly up with a twitch which gives an indescribable motion to the ribbons and laces upon the hump, and causes a general flutter of ruffles and flounces, which forbids the idea of the elaborate toilette of Miss Airs ever being lost in its wearer.

To nothing under heaven may the walk of Miss Airs, as she sallies around the ball-room, be compared, except to the proud strutting of the peacock as it spreads its brilliant plumage for admiration.

Saratoga has its “Bridge of Smiles” which spans the street about fifty feet above the ground and connects the ball-room of Congress Hall with the hotel. Upon festive nights it is spread with a rich carpet, and illuminated with Chinese lanterns of various colors. If the night be stormy, the bridge is protected by an awning, but if fine, it affords a rare opportunity for contemplating the starry heavens, or for a pair of lovers to whisper soft nothings into each other’s ears while they pretend to be watching the moon.

In fact, no more romantic place for a moonlight flirtation could well be imagined than this beautiful

bridge, with its swinging lights, with its far-off canopy of blue studded with twinkling stars, and the soft, delicious music of the band floating out upon the night from the brilliant ball-room.

If there were not always that Argus-eyed ticket-man at the other end of the bridge to spoil the romance !

Many a time have I heard young Limberflap complain of the heat of the room after a dance, and beg Miss Airs to come for a few minutes upon the bridge.

Limberflap, as we have said, is a sentimental youth who is given to writing verses. But if he needs the presence of Miss Airs upon the bridge to inspire him when he composes ditties to the moon, then those ditties will lack inspiration, for Miss Airs always remembers that ticket-man, and gently refuses.

Besides, she is not much given to romance, and she has enough of Limberflap's adoring glances in the ball-room, without endangering the starch in her muslins, and the crimp in her hair, out there in the damp. There are other reasons also for Miss Airs refusing to walk upon the bridge with Limberflap.

The end of the season is drawing near, and there is Snipkins, the "only son of his father," and that

father a millionaire, and Miss Airs has not as yet made the slightest impression upon his heart.

What will her mother say? This may be her last season at Saratoga, for the finances of the family are running low, and one cannot be turning old silks forever! Should Snipkins ask her to walk upon the bridge, regardless either of the damp air or of the ticket-man, she would go.

The masquerade ball had been looked forward to by this rather *passé* belle as affording her one last grand opportunity of appearing in a new phase, in which she might possibly captivate Snipkins. She chose the costume of a Swiss shepherdess, and imagined herself to be the very personification of innocence and loveliness.

But whoever saw a rural maiden walking with a crook in her back, instead of in her hands—and her hands swinging from the wrists in that peculiar style known as the Droop?

But where was Snipkins at the ball? His individuality was for a brief time lost in that of a Spanish cavalier. But, alas! forgetting himself for a moment, he raised his hat, and although he still retained his mask, Miss Airs knew him. His bald head betrayed him!

That was a happy moment for Araminta, and she

improved it. She managed to inspire Snipkins with a terrible state of curiosity as to her identity, and just as sure as "pity is akin to love," so is curiosity akin to a desperate flirtation. Where were Snipkins' eyes that he failed to recognize that affected walk and those languishing hands?

Alas for Love, that he is blind!

Mrs. Puffy returned from her trip to Lake George on purpose to attend this masquerade ball. She was bent on beguiling the ancient Puffy into some sly love-making under the mask that she might tease him forever after about it. But lo! in the bewilderment of dominos and masques, of clowns and harlequins, Humpty-Dumpties, Satans, tambourine girls and pretty shepherdesses, dukes and jockeys, Highland laddies and bluebeards, contrabands and cavaliers—among all these Puffy was not to be found.

He knew enough not to uncover *his* little bald pate, and, as the evening wore away, Mrs. Puffy became exceedingly anxious lest her spouse should be enacting the fond lover to some one else instead of to herself, as she had intended.

And no doubt he was!

Poor Mrs. Puffy! An amusing incident which

occurred during her foreign tour was related to us to-day. It is too good to keep.

Visiting an artist's studio in Rome, Mrs. Puffy became much interested in a painting representing David killing Goliath. Noting its rather dingy appearance, she said to the artist: "That must be quite an old picture." "About a hundred years old," was the reply. "Ah! painted by the old masters, then," exclaimed Mrs. Puffy. "*Why, it must be a Madonna!*"

What Mrs. Puffy's ideas of a Madonna were at that moment as she cast another admiring glance at the huge form of Goliath expiring at the feet of David, it would be impossible to conjecture.

XVI.

THE SARATOGA DROOP.

Nor to have acquired the Saratoga Droop, is to be shockingly behind the fashionable spirit of the age.

Miss Airs has it to perfection. I caught Fitz Hugh himself this morning trying to catch it.

Young Limberflap, the favorite of all the young ladies who are so happy as to know him, being rather a lady-like young fellow as well as an acknowledged lady-killer, does it beautifully.

But some unsophisticated people, some one whose education does not keep up to the fashionable improvements (?) of the day, may not exactly understand what the Saratoga Droop is.

Therefore, O Muse, inspire my pen that it may teach the stupid world the sublime art of carrying its hands in such a manner as unmistakably to express *I've nothing to do!*

That is what the hands say here, and that is why the Saratoga Droop is so popular.

And this is the way they do it : The elbows are

pressed closely against the sides, the lower parts of the arms are then raised toward the chest, and the hands hang listlessly forward.

The *tout ensemble* of the Droop is very much like the wings of a chicken prepared for a broil.

This position of the hands does very well for the display of diamond rings; also for the fan which dangles from one hand, and the dainty white *mouchoir* which droops from the other.

But the principal object of thus carrying the hands is, 'as I have mentioned before, simply to express that such hands have *nothing to do*—are idle hands, listless hands; hands that lay hold of nothing earnest in life, and have but a limp, feeble touch for even the pleasures they strive to grasp.

Speaking of hands as being indicative of character, it is odd to reflect what an opportunity for studying the different phases of human nature is afforded by such a dance as the last figure in the Lancers.

The touch of no two hands is alike; one touches your fingers lightly, as though fearful of crushing rose leaves; another clasps your hand warmly, a momentary welcome, and an adieu, from a stranger whom you pass in the journey of life; a third catches your hand with a quick grasp and drops it

suddenly—as one who picks up pebbles and casts them away again, having mistaken them for gems. But the fourth and last is the cold, damp touch of a lifeless hand, which sends a disagreeable chill to one's heart. People with such hands should always wear gloves, for contact with the cold skin of a toad could not be more disagreeable, or more suggestive of the horrors of cavernous tombs!

My friend S. who, though something satirical, is by no means ill-natured, has taken up the matter of the Droop, and complains bitterly of the custom among ladies, both dames and damsels, which some have happily designated as the “Kangaroo flop.”

And this is what he has to say:

“What *can* be more ungraceful than the fashion of carrying the hands in that elevated, far-reaching manner, and looking as if they were dislocated at the wrists?

“And yet nearly half the women, old and young, have caught the foolish trick, and—(see there, for example?)—go dangling their hands before them, much like so many walking kangaroos, and exactly like so many Shaker saints as they appear in their ridiculous devotional dances.

“But then the poor kangaroos have the excuse of

nature, and the Shakers the plea of religion, while their imitators have no apology whatever, save that other poor fools are doing the same thing; that, in short, it is 'the fashion' at present; just as the preposterous 'back stoop' was for a season, three or four years ago.

"We all know that likeness-taking paper-cutters were the death of the stooping abomination; why don't the same excellent executioner kill off the human kangaroo in the same way? He could do it in ten days, and do 'society' an incalculable service."

But Saratoga has the infection of a worse vice, or folly, than the droop, and that is, fashionable slang.

Just an hour ago, while walking upon the piazza, we overheard the remark, "My dear, you've got a *bunged-up eye!*" We turned, expecting to see some female member of the *canaille* who had lost her way and strayed among refined people, when lo! we beheld a woman dressed in the height of fashion, with costly laces upon her garb, and with rich jewels gleaming in rivalry of a pair of bright dark eyes.

It was evidently she who had made use of the above elegant expression!

“It don’t pay” is a phrase so common with both men and women, as scarcely to be noticed as a slang phrase; still it might be inferred from this universally used remark that we were a selfish, penurious people, who thought nothing worth undertaking or accomplishing unless it would *pay*! “It does-n’t pay!” may suit the coarse lips of an ignorant man, but it ill becomes the rosy mouth of a youthful belle.

“It’s perfectly dreadful!” “Most horrible!” “The awfulest thing you ever heard!” are expressions constantly used by young ladies of the day to express very simple and commonplace affairs. And one wonders, when hearing the English language so exhausted upon the *positive* degree, where words may be found to express the *superlative*?

If not found in legitimate terms, they have to be invented, as witness the following:

“My dear,” exclaimed Miss Airs, “you should have seen Ned this morning! You know he’s a cold-hearted fellow, and I’ve nearly exhausted my stock of new dresses in trying to break his heart; but he’s *caterpillared* at last!”

Now, what in the world Miss Airs meant by *caterpillared*, we leave the student of entomology to explain.

I have no patience with Aunt Prim, who says that young Limberflap is a "nice young man." If dressing in exquisite taste, parting one's hair in the middle, affecting the wearing of veils, and cultivating the Saratoga Droop constitute a nice young man, then this elegant Limberflap is a perfect charm.

Just as pretty, and just as useful as the charm one hangs upon a necklace, or lets dangle from a chain--just so charming is young Addlepate.

But Miss Airs has this latter young gentleman so encompassed by the bewilderment of her beauty and graces, that he does not know whether he is a charm or not.

XVII.

A RAINY DAY.

PICTURE to yourself, dear reader, a rainy day in Saratoga!

No drives, no races, no ramble through the Park, no promenading the piazzas, no anything, except huddling together in little groups in the parlors, watching the industrious plying of needle and thread by those young ladies who are addicted to worsted work, listening to the gossip of the old ladies, and trying to shut your eyes to the desperate flirtations with which the younger people endeavor to wile away the hours and the hearts of their adorers at the same time.

There was not a young lady who dared to put her head out of doors yesterday, for the damp air is an inveterate enemy to crimps and curls, and a sad exposé of "rats" and "mice," to say nothing of taking all pretensions out of newly done-up frills and ruffles.

So the young ladies contented themselves in the morning with taking possession of the corners—in fact there was not a corner to be had after ten o'clock—

and while apparently absorbed in weaving bright-colored threads in and out of the canvas, they sought to spin a little romance into the becrusted hearts of the young men who gathered around them.

But there is not much romance in a Saratoga flirtation. People whose whole lives are devoted to the love of display are not given to sentiment, and a genuine *affaire du cœur* is far rarer at the Springs than diamonds of the first water. Saratoga is renowned for its curious collection of old bachelors.

Season after season they come to rejuvenate, by drinking the waters and basking in the soft light of young beauty's eyes, and go away just as callous, just as indifferent to feminine charms, and just as much wrapped up in their own selfishness, as ever.

It is whispered, however, that many of these antiquated youths have been the unhappy victims of little romances which occurred here long years ago, when some pretty trifler cast away the heart she had won so easily, and accepted the hand of a wealthier rival.

It's all very well to waltz and chat with Charles Augustus; to lean upon the arm of Adolphus and look unutterable things into his eyes; but, if Charles Augustus or Adolphus have neither of them an income sufficient to support the extravagances of a

fashionable wife, what is the use of marrying them? Miss Airs knows very well what she is about in her daily routine at Saratoga, and plays her cards with admirable skill. She knows just when to encourage Ádolphus with a tender look, and a little sigh, which does not come exactly from her heart, but rather from the tightness of her dress, and she knows, also, just when to snub him for the sake of Fitzaddle, whose father is a millionaire, and who has, besides, a fortune in his own right.

The most amusing incident of the rainy day was at the dinner-table, when poor Bachelor Grumpy essayed to eat an ear of corn and drew out all his teeth at the first bite!

Luckily, Aunt Prim did not see him, and he gradually recovered his equanimity.

At the dessert, however, the dear old lady was flustrated by hearing a soft whisper in her ear:

“Will you have a kiss, ma’am?”

Now that was a pretty question to ask a lady in a small dining-room where about seven hundred people sit down to refresh their appetites, and it is no wonder that Aunt Prim looked aghast.

Bachelor Grumpy, perceiving her sudden embarrassment, pointed to the bill of fare, and after all it was only a sugar kiss!

Madge says Aunt P. looked really disappointed.

Apropos of the dinner, a trifle over fifteen hundred guests to be fed and lodged, and looked after generally, might be supposed to perplex the mind of any one man—but these Saratoga landlords have a wonderful talent for making room, and, like poor Oliver Twist, are always clamoring for more. And then to think of the “growlers” who find shelter under these vast roofs!

There is the testy old gentleman who is always complaining of his waiter, and who has no patience to wait his turn at the table; the fastidious lady with a delicate appetite, who eats three chickens a day, half a dozen eggs, two fishes, to say nothing of vegetables, fruits, cake, and cream, and then declares she has nothing to eat!

Ah! think of the poor chickens that every day bewail the loss of their heads with fantastic dance upon their expiring toes, to feed this vast multitude of hungry individuals! Some day we intend to explore the subterranean regions of this vast hotel, and to inquire into the secrets of its *menage*.

Aunt Prim says it is quite time that Madge and I learn something about housekeeping.

But we haven't time to think about that now.

And there are the people who complain of climb-

ing up the stairs, and yet refuse to trust themselves in the elevator.

It is amusing to see the nervous, timid people who cannot resign themselves to the benefits of modern inventions, and go climbing the wearying stairs, even up to the fifth floor, for fear the elevator will fall!

To hear the complaints of these poor unfortunates, who, according to their own accounts, can get nothing to eat, and have nothing to wear, one would suppose Saratoga to be a pitiable place to live in.

But it is to be suspected that those who complain the most are those who have never been used to luxuries at home, and, therefore, cannot appreciate them abroad.

After dinner we had music in the parlor—instead of upon the piazza, as usual.

Bright fires were glowing in the grates, and everybody having resigned themselves to a rainy day, began to look cheerful, and to really enjoy a cosy, old-fashioned afternoon.

In the evening there was a grand ball at the —.

But balls at the — do not appear to be very popular. The people up there are so dreadfully prim, so absorbed with the idea of their own importance, their pedigree, wealth, etc., that they look

with distrustful eyes upon every new-comer, and refuse to be on intimate terms with any one.

How these people contrive to enjoy themselves at a stiff, formal ball, where they sit in stately rows, looking grimly at their neighbors, and elevating their aristocratic noses at those who venture to join the dance, is beyond all understanding.

Verily there must be a world of satisfaction in the simple consciousness of one's own superiority.

It is a wonder that these very "old families" can content themselves with life in a Republican country at all.

XVIII.

OLD BACHELORS.

LIFE at Saratoga is losing much of the formality which distinguished it in former years. There is more sociability; and, therefore, more enjoyment. Instead of three or four changes of toilette, two costumes in one day are allowed to be quite sufficient for the most fashionable lady to be irresistible in.

What pleasure there can be in spending at least one-quarter of a day in gazing at one's self and one's dry-goods reflected in a mirror, passes all understanding.

And even this waste of time was scarcely sufficient for the making of four toilettes in one day.

It may be that Flora McFlimsy became impatient at being obliged to lose so much of Charles Augustus' charming society—and hence the revolution!

If, as a clever writer remarks, we could only, "like Raphael's angels, be finished up at the ears with a pair of wings," what a comfort it would be!

No bothersome trains, no wearisome ruffles and

flounces, no remorseless stays and ridiculous paniers, no shivering under loads of apparel, or melting under a summer sun, and wishing that Eve hadn't eaten the apple, and that we might have lived in Paradise forever in blissful ignorance of milliners and dress-makers!

Finished up at the ears with wings, a modern belle would need nothing but frizzled locks and her paint and pomade box to render her adorable.

One of the most distinctive and peculiar features of the season at Saratoga, as we have remarked, is the frightful prevalence every year of old bachelors.

Just as sure as the bee and the humming-bird return with the summer to bask in the sun and flutter among the flowers, just so sure the bachelors leave their gloomy garrets, located Heaven knows where, to sun their frigid lives among the belles of Saratoga.

Such an array of them! Such a display of them!

Wizen-faced, crooked-back, bow-legged; some with luxuriant heads of hair plentifully sprinkled with gray—most of them frightfully bald, with their sparse locks brushed out in the primmest manner; and some, fearful to relate, without any hair at all, and with their empty craniums attired in wigs!

Crusty and cynical, crabbed and mystical, forlorn and miserable—why come the old bachelors here?

Empty-headed, of course, for no man with sufficient wit or wisdom would be an old bachelor; empty-hearted, for no man with a heart ever lived to be an old bachelor.

A fair and fat widow suggests that these old *habitués* of Saratoga have been all these years looking for rich wives. Poor fellows! They belong to the forlorn hope. As though a pretty girl with youth, wealth, and beauty at her command was going to marry a snuffy old bachelor! Really, the egotism of these men surpasses all belief.

Leaving the young girls, it is quite useless for the old bachelor to pay his devoirs to a widow. Widows are far too wise to be entrapped into marrying an obstinate, antiquated old bachelor. To manage a man in his youthful and more tractable days is, goodness knows, enough to try any woman's patience, but to attempt the conversion of a self-satisfied, obdurate, perverse old bachelor to a woman's way of viewing affairs, is what no sensible widow would ever undertake, not even though the sly old fellow declares that his heart is melted at last before her charms.

By charms, he means, of course, the widow's full purse, carriage, servants, etc., etc.

Now, no rational being would for one moment suppose that any old bachelor could have the smallest remnant of a heart left, and when he inclines to the sentimental the effect is immensely ridiculous.

Among these forlorn specimens of humanity who are this moment strolling up and down the piazza, pretending to admire the ladies, although everybody knows they cannot recognize the loveliest charmer at the distance of three feet—first we will single out that dapper little man, who, if he were twenty years younger, would be called a “love of a man;” always exquisitely dressed—as what man shouldn't be who has devoted himself to matters of the toilette for upwards of forty years?—with the whitest of hands, the blackest of boots, and the glossiest of locks (what few there are left of them) of any man in Saratoga.

Of course such an immaculate personage as this would never submit to have his collar rumpled by a woman's arms! And who would dream of disarranging those prim, mutton-chop whiskers with a kiss? Surely every separate hair would bristle with indignation before such temerity.

Next comes my tall and fidgety old bachelor—



MAKING REPAIRS.

whose clothes are, somehow, always awry—whose cravat is never half tied—whose whole appearance is, in fact, fearfully suggestive of lost buttons, broken strings, and forlorn attempts, without knowing how, to look respectably.

Any one can see at a glance that that man is in desperate need of some feminine hand to keep him in order.

Fancy those clumsy fingers of his sewing on buttons! Why, he hasn't even learned yet to brush his own hair!

One cannot help speculating, while commiserating this lonely man, upon the great difference a good little wife would have made in his existence. We know a distinguished divine who never appeared in the pulpit with his hair properly combed—indeed, people said he never combed it at all—until after he was married. So there is, at least, one authenticated instance of benefit derived by an old bachelor from being married.

As for those prim individuals who have spent altogether too much time upon their personal appearance, perhaps the best thing a young wife could do to startle them into a forgetfulness of self, would be to comb their heads occasionally with a three-legged stool.

One of the most dangerous of old bachelors is the handsome man, who goes on through long years ensnaring unsuspecting hearts, and who has no idea of marrying. The most unimpressible man in the world is the handsome old bachelor. He is so perfectly satisfied with himself, that no woman is divine enough to give him the heartache. So, of all men, beware of him.

The most detestable, because the most inveterate and past all hope, of all old bachelors is that gray-haired, bald-headed old gentleman who is saying pretty nothings to that bright-eyed young girl, who is laughing at him behind her fan.

Serves him right, too. For the last forty or fifty—some say sixty—years has this man haunted Saratoga, and managed to successfully elude all manoeuvring mannnas and beautiful daughters. Of course he is enormously wealthy, else who would tolerate him for a moment? He always selects the liveliest girls for his partners in the dance, and waltzes as though he never knew, nor ever expected to know, the twinges of rheumatics.

If some good turn of the gout would only keep him at home for one season! Now, what amusement does this old fellow suppose young ladies take in his society?

Not a single one of them, be she fresh as a rose or long since *passé*, but wishes him a thousand miles from Saratoga when he begs her hand for the dance.

How odious to be dancing that delightful waltz in Graybeard's arms, with Adolphus looking dejectedly and reproachfully on.

The secret of the youth's melancholy is that he is poor, while Graybeard is rich—and Adolphus trembles for his chances.

But he need not fear. Graybeard has not the slightest idea of ever marrying.

And if the old wizard only knew what a tool he was in the hands of these lovely young belles—how he was coquetted with, flirted with, only to make younger and handsomer lovers jealous, how irascible he would be!

Although Graybeard will not marry, he has been the means of hastening many a match, for hesitating lovers have been driven into casting their hearts into the balance with Graybeard's gold, and it is to the credit of human nature that hearts are sometimes finally triumphant.

And thus it is that when Angelina wishes to bring Adolphus to his senses, or rather to her feet,

she resorts to flirting desperately and wickedly with unsuspecting Graybeard.

This ruse has usually the desired effect, and no one needs to waste sympathy upon the old man in the case, since his breast is as devoid of any vestige of a heart, as a soft clam is of a pearl.

Bold and calculating, selfish and cynical, past all thrills of romance or love, past even the memory of young and warm affections—the old bachelor at last finds old age creeping stealthily upon him, with every link in life broken or gone, and with scarcely one friend to drop a tear over his grave when he shall have passed away.

A married man at seventy may have a warm heart, but a bachelor who has lived all his life without the love of woman or child, becomes early frozen into hopeless frigidity. But this stupid subject has made me positively sleepy; not even an Adonis appearing upon the piazza could keep my eyes open, much less this array of miserable old bachelors.

XIX.

THE BELLES.

Etre belle, c'est regner ! To be beautiful is to reign, says the poet.

It has been somewhat of a puzzle this summer to determine who, by right of her grace and beauty, is the reigning belle of Saratoga.

And the question is yet unanswered. We have all styles and types of beauty here. There are plenty of belles, but who is the one bright, particular star, the one who reigns undisputed queen of beauty, the one who distances all other beauties by her regal splendor, who shines out—

“ Amid a world, the only one ! ”

Ah ! who is she ?

Past seasons have had their celebrated beauties—the lovely girls who have charmed and fascinated all—but this year society seems to have no especial darling whom it is willing to crown as the belle of Saratoga.

We have a profusion of roses, but somehow they all have thorns.

This young lady is acknowledged to be pretty, but she has a bad temper. That one is stylish and dresses magnificently, but she is too haughty to be popular. That one is lovely, but she has no style—and so on.

Mrs. Grundy has some flaw to find in the fairest pearl.

It is quite evident, my dear belles, that something else is necessary to render one truly attractive, besides a pretty face and a lavish wardrobe.

Some young ladies here have always reigned as belles in one sense of the word, ever since they first made their *débüt* in society, but still they are unmarried, and seem likely to continue so.

This is doubtless a great mystery not only to themselves, but also to their friends. It may be easily solved.

When these young ladies first came to spend the season at Saratoga, they were young, beautiful, and excelled all others in the elegance of their toilettes. But they were haughty, proud, and esteemed no young man as worthy of being a suitor to their lily-white hands.

To marry one of these beauties, great wealth was of course indispensable. Next, pedigree; for they had a holy horror of plebeian blood. Next, manly

beauty; and lastly, the most abject devotion to themselves.

But no such marvellous man came suing at their feet. Modern society rarely combining in one individual the beauty of Adonis, the wealth of Cræsus, and Marc Antony's devotion—these haughty belles still remain unmarried.

Having passed season after season without entangling the golden fish in their nets, and having grown slightly *passé*, they have returned to Saratoga this summer, armed with new devices for subduing that obdurate creature—man.

They have summoned to their aid the subtle hand of art.

They have become elaborate artists of themselves. The dark-haired damsel, whose raven tresses have failed to win a husband for their wearer, comes out like a new-blown flower, with rare golden locks, and challenges the world to admire a new beauty.

Her face is a perfect study—not for the soul which it reveals, but for its features.

The eyebrows are tinted; the eyes are bright and dazzling—with arsenic; the lips are vermilion; and, as for brow and cheek, Nature has no rival for the lily and rose which are blended there.

A black, or white, lace veil is of course neces-

sary to be worn over such charms throughout the day, to keep the impertinent sunlight from telling tales.

So much for the brunette.

As for the blonde, she has grown weary of her pale locks, and, by some device, has coaxed them into a glowing red. Her complexion, no longer fair, but frightfully sallow, is so covered with chalk as to render it positively ghastly.

There was a time when delicate, sickly looking women were the type of women most admired.

Thank Heaven! that time is past, and a woman can afford to be healthy and stout, rosy and good-natured, and yet be admitted to fashionable society—though goodness only knows what great pleasure or profit is to be derived from that!

Now the brunette and the blonde have come back to Saratoga with hosts of new dresses, new hair, new faces, all fearfully and wonderfully made, and yet—and yet—they sit like wall flowers shivering in the cold, unsurrounded by beaux.

If some innocent individual who has not frequented Saratoga for the last four or five years chances to be struck by their beauty and style, and pays them some attention, it is noticed that

he too, like former admirers, soon makes his final bow,

“And quietly steals away.”

Poor things! This season, like all the rest, will glide away, and no happy speculation be realized in the matrimonial market by these fashionable old maids.

Which shows that there is something wrong in the feminine ideas of attraction.

It is useless to put on the gaudy wings of the butterfly, and still remain a grub.

Who admires the golden glow of the wings and forgets the worm beneath?

So, my dear fading flowers, had you but passed one-half the time in making your souls beautiful, that you have spent in acquiring new charms of person, you had not been lacking in the rare devotion of true hearts. .

Had you cultivated those graces of the heart, those enduring charms which make a woman always lovable; had you polished some jewels of the mind instead of counting your treasures in diamonds and pearls, life would not have become the vapid, idle dream, the round of dissipation and disappointments, which it has been.

Remember that beauty is but the velvet flush of

the rose ; the charm of the flower is in its fragrance. Its perfume is its soul.

A lovely and lovable woman is like the rose ; she gathers her true beauty from the inner life.

Go home, my dear *passé* belles, and begin life anew.

Lay aside your false hair. Let Mother Nature tint your natural locks as she will, for she is the true artist after all. She knows where to fling her gold and brown, and where to leave her snow-drifts and silvery threads.

Throw away the powder and the rouge ; the flowers have no need of them—why have you ?

Give less time to your ruffles and flounces ; the world does not lie in a French fold or the fit of a glove. There are things more important than the style of a bonnet, more enduring than the latest pattern for a dress, and therefore more worthy of thought.

Take up some aim in life, live more for the inner and less for the outer world.

Then, if some true heart is laid upon your shrine, it is well.

If not, it may still be well.

It is not all of life to love, or to marry, and a

woman's life may still be a success without a man's heart in it.

But to come now to the younger belles—the merry maidens of sweet sixteen and of twenty. For them also we have the same word of warning and advice.

There is nothing more beautiful in God's world than a beautiful young girl, with the sparkle of youth in her eye and the dew of freshness upon her lip.

That she should not be always beautiful is a vain regret ; that she might be always adorable, but often is not, is a still sadder one.

And so to the charming young girls who throng the parlors of Saratoga ; who float, like beautiful dreams, through the dance in the ball-room ; whose lips are always wreathed in smiles and whose voices are musical with laughter ; whose lives have been one unbroken sunbeam—to these, whom we ardently love, we have one message—

To be always loved, one must continue always to grow lovable.

It is not beauty alone, it is not style, nor wealth, which takes hold of a true man's heart and retains it, or which awakens the admiration of the world.

More than these is necessary to inspire a genuine love and admiration.

How many of the lovely girls here who possess all the charms of youth, will make charming old women, is a question well worth considering.

Just now to be a belle, the only things esteemed to be necessary are, to be dressed always in the very latest style, to wear one's hair on the top of one's head, to walk on tilted heels, to carry a vinaigrette, to know when to faint, when to blush, when to snub admirers with no prospects, when to look tender and languishing, to dance and flirt to one's heart's content, to follow the ceaseless round of pleasure and never go weary—such is the life of the Saratoga belle.

The aim of her industry is to work cats and dogs upon canvas ; of her literature, to read novels.

A sly little flirtation with Fritz on the balcony is all very nice, but as to marrying Fritz, that is impossible, for he has no money, nothing but prospects.

And who can buy diamonds and silks with prospects ?

Apropos of the belles, here is a pen portrait of a fair New Yorker whom we call "beautiful Maude," and who queens it right royally over many susceptible hearts. Maude has the loveliest golden hair, which is crimped and curled, looped high up on her head and flowing luxuriantly over her shoulders—

in fact a perfect marvel of a *coiffure* to the unaccustomed eye. Her eyes are blue as the water-lilies which bloom in the vale of Cashmere; and as for her complexion—ah! I should need the inspired pen of an Arabian poet to describe that! Indeed, I could never quite make up my mind about that complexion, so pink and white, such a delicious mingling of the lily with the rose; a pink that never deepens into red, a white that almost dazzles; it seems too beautiful for nature, too natural for art! No doubt it should be attributed to the New York air. Apart from her beauty, Miss Maude has every advantage which wealth can bestow. An inexhaustible wardrobe, jewels and trinkets without number, and adorers *ad infinitum*. She is just five feet four in stature, and would be extremely graceful in her carriage were it not for the little boots she wears upon her dainty feet, which are tilted up on heels three inches high. Such an absurd fashion is by no means conducive to an Andalusian walk! This morning beautiful Maude is charmingly arrayed in a white dress of the finest India muslin; which is cut up into endless puffs, and set together again with broad valenciennes lace. This is worn over a pink silk. The short tunic is also of pink silk and bordered with deep lace, and a pink ribbon, almost

half a yard in width, is knotted up in a marvellous way to form a sash at the back. A hat—not much to speak of for size—only two or three rosebuds caught together by a bit of lace—yet, nevertheless, a dainty and costly trifle, rests upon the front of her head, and is almost lost in the luxuriance of golden hair which falls in tiny ringlets over her forehead, and ripples down over her shoulders, reflecting the dazzling sunbeams like threads of living gold. White gloves, and a white silken parasol, whose pink lining casts a soft, tinted shade over her fair face, completes the toilette of this lovely girl. Maude looks like a beautiful fairy who might live upon love and honey-dew all of her days. But I can assure you that she has no such romantic ideas amid all the folly of her little brain, and woe to the rash youth with less than ten thousand a year, and prospects of more, who should dare to aspire to her hand.—It would not be pleasant to meet the flashing of those violet eyes if Maude were angry; there is heat lightning even in the softest summer clouds.

XX.

SNUBBING.

I AM happy to say that my advice and warning to the old bachelors has taken effect. The dapper little man who has been so long noted as the pink of perfection, has given a Byronic turn to his dark locks; that is, he allows at least three individual hairs to fall over his forehead, that he may no longer be noted for his primness; the crazy old bachelor is making frantic efforts to tie his cravat in a proper manner, and has positively been rebuttooned—that is, some one has kindly sewn on his buttons for him, for this forlorn individual, in plying the needle, usually placed the button on wrong side out, with his clumsy fingers; and the wizen-faced, bald-headed old man has forsaken the ball-room and the dance, and mopes alone in a corner upon the piazza, the very picture of desolation and despair. His eyes are at last opened to the mournful fact that he is no longer an eligible partner for the pretty young ladies around whom he has fluttered so long, and now he

sits a pathetic monument of lost opportunities, dismally reciting to himself those well-known lines—

“Of all sad words of tongue or pen,
The saddest are these—it might have been!”

Poor fellow! if he had consented years ago to give his dim eyes the aid of a pair of spectacles, he might have discovered what an insufferable nuisance he was to the merry young belles who were never weary of diverting themselves with his infirmities.

I have seen this pitiable old man the victim of a dozen caprices of a young girl in a morning upon the piazza.

First, she would drop her fan, as though she were not in the least aware of the almost utter impossibility of the old bachelor picking it up; as though she never dreamed that he had a stiff back and was troubled with gouty limbs; next she would ask him to read the last Saratoga letter to her, pleading a headache, and declaring it hurt her eyes to read!

And the wicked girl's eyes dancing with fire all the while, and as bright as diamonds, for she knew very well that this superannuated bean could not read without glasses! And these he never wears upon the piazza.

I must not omit to mention that one old bachelor here is called the "belle of Saratoga," probably because he has such agreeable ways, for he is one of your charming old bachelors, and the anxious mamas are always willing to trust their pretty dears in his care. This circumstance causes all the young gentlemen to cultivate his acquaintance, and altogether he has quite a delightful time of it in Saratoga—much pleasanter, I fancy, than when at home in Gotham, for there he keeps bachelor's hall with two bachelor brothers.

Think of that, young ladies! Three lonely, crusty old bachelors, all sitting down to sip their tea in frigid silence—a melancholy, miserable trio!

Once a week they have a sewing meeting to replace lost buttons and sew up the eye-openers in their socks. Then they look over the household accounts, and scold Bridget for wasting the tea and the sugar, reprove her for leaving the front windows open that the old maids over the way may peep in, and charge her, on no account, to converse with the pretty and wily widow who lives close by, and who sometimes encounters Bridget at the market.

So these old bachelors are terribly afraid of widows and old maids. How absurd to think that one of them should come up here to be styled the "belle

of Saratoga," and to play duenna to half a dozen pretty girls!

But dismissing the old bachelors as peremptorily as they have often been dismissed before—we turn to ponder the question whether it is wise to appear beautiful one hour, only to appear ugly the next, from sheer contrast.

It takes the morning light—the full blaze of day—to reveal people to each other; and therefore, these morning hours do much either to dispel or complete the illusions of the ball-room the night before.

Miss Pinky Pearl, whose complexion at night is something marvellous, in fact, a veritable cream of roses, never ventures on the piazza without a veil over her face, and a parasol which serves to keep off the too scrutinizing gaze of both sun and men. But Madge, who never powders or paints, looks better than ever in the morning, provided her eyes are not heavy with sleep.

The belle of the ball-room is not apt to be the belle of the piazza. Full dress, diamonds, and the other *et ceteras* of a lady's evening toilette, are apt to impart a delusive charm to beauty, and the young lady who is a perfect divinity in a cloud of tulle, who is radiant under the brilliant chandeliers,

may be plain enough when she appears in the morning in a simple dress, with her hair plainly arranged, and her complexion devoid of the ball-room lilies and roses.

But to pass from the young ladies who are so elaborated, look at the elderly ones who come out in the morning as fresh as new blown roses, inspiring themselves and every one else with the belief that they are young again. Look at the light robes, the gay ribbons, the long curls, the jaunty little hat ; and were it not for the keen gaze beneath the universal veil, one might fancy a miss of sixteen sat under that parasol—instead of a woman of sixty.

“How fearfully and how wonderfully we are made!” comes to our mind with a new significance, as we watch the passing throng.

Thank Heaven that gray hairs are at last fashionable ; and that the most of our elderly dames are content with such graces as Mother Nature has given them, and wear the chaplet of years as a crown formed of precious jewels from the casket of time.

Youth has its charms, but so also has maturer age. An old lady may be just as truly charming as a young belle. But the charms of which we speak are not to be found in the powder or paint box.

The latest development of Saratoga life which

has attracted our especial attention is the fearful manner in which people snub each other. The fine art of snubbing has attained its fullest perfection here. It is no uncommon thing to see people, who have been apparently the most ardent friends, pass each other without a glance.

From the prevalence of turned-up noses, one who is a careful observer of the passing throng might imagine that *le nez retroussé* was considered a high type of beauty, and therefore our belles were doing their best to cultivate it.

“My dear Mrs. Delta, I am delighted to see you!” exclaims Mrs. Beta, rushing up to her quondam friend.

Mrs. Delta draws herself up coldly, says “Good-morning, Madam,” and stalks away.

To the gentleman who escorts her she says, “How dare that creature speak to me?”

And her nose puts on an aspiring air which is truly beautiful to witness.

A young lady who has been trifling cruelly with an admirer’s heart for a week or more—lavishing her brightest glances and sweetest smiles upon him, suddenly ignores him altogether, absolutely disdaining to even look upon him.

To solve the apparent enigma, one has only to

ascertain that this young man has only a few thousands a year, while a new admirer has untold wealth at his command.

Is it well to know that man or woman? Will it do to recognize and frequent the society of those people? are questions often asked, and usually answered according to the status a critical world has given to the individual.

To know the person whom society does not recognize is accounted more than a crime.

There are, in fact, a great many people who never know you at all unless you are dressed quite *à la mode*, and the estimate they place upon you is exactly in accordance to the garments you wear; just in proportion to the value of your jewels or laces do you rise or fall in these peoples' opinion. As for your individual character, that doesn't matter so much.

People who hold their position in society by their wealth alone, like to turn up their noses at those who have something better than wealth to recommend them.

It is so provoking to meet people who are comparatively poor, and yet who refuse to be dazzled by the glitter of diamonds or the splendor of costly raiment and pretentious equipages!

To snub the individual who has neither beauty, wealth, nor fame is accounted a virtue.

So goes the world. And a strange, strange world it is.

One peculiarity of Saratoga life is, that it is made up of little welcomes and farewells. Every day some friend makes his adieux; but every day some well-known face reappears amid the merry throng, and so the vacant place is soon filled, and there is no such thing as loneliness or weariness, except, perhaps, to those who have grown weary of society long ago, and who prefer the quiet, shaded walks of life to these gay scenes.

Life moves on from day to day like a pleasant dream—or like passing through the mazes of the dance; we clasp hands for a moment and then part forever, with perchance the memory of a glance, or touch, which will live in our hearts long after the summer flowers have faded, and the green leaves grown red and sere;—summer memories, which will float through the long winter of life to come, like the incense of unseen flowers which follow us on our way.

Little friendships, little loves; words half jesting, half tender; a mingling of sighs and smiles; a heart-throb of pleasure pierced with a shadow of regret; a

series of welcomes and farewells—such is life at Saratoga. Apart from the attractions of the hotels, where life is one constant round of gayety, Nature here has many charms.

The drives are beautiful, and go in what direction you will the same charming variety of scenery is spread before you.

Mother Nature never snubs her loving children; she welcomes them all with a smile. Her heart is always open to us, always tender and true. The favorite drive is that to the famed Saratoga Lake. Past green fields filled with waving corn; past green meadows from which comes the sweet odor of the new-mown hay; past the red and green velvet of clover; past the white-mantled fields of buckwheat, where myriads of star-like blossoms lift up their voices of perfume; past green groves and dark woods from which the wild flowers creep to the roadside and whisper the secrets of shaded glens; past all these, onward to the beautiful lake which lies, a *solitaire* set in emerald, upon Nature's deep heart.

To sit and dream one quiet hour upon the banks of this blue, limpid lake, is to steal at least one bit of true romance from the gay life around us.

And this hour should be near the eventide—

just when the sun has bidden the day farewell, and left the clouds all flushed and glowing with his parting kiss; when the far-off mountains are wrapped in a golden mist, and every ripple of the lake reflects a dying sunbeam.

With a musical murmur the little waves break upon the shore at our feet, lavishing their last jewels of sunlight upon the green blades of grass, and singing in a weird monotone the dirge of the dead day.

One cannot help thinking, at such a time, of those who have come and gone before us; of the grave and the gay, the light-hearted and the weary ones, who have lingered a little while beside this lake, and then drifted away to distant homes—some to quiet hearthstones, some into busy, anxious life—and many, ah! very many, into that unknown world “from whose bourne no traveller returns.”

How many of life's little romances have sprung into being amid the charming spots which encircle this placid lake! The very air which floats over the water, full of the mystery of the mountains, the sweetness of the forests, the cool tranquillity of the lake, is freighted with romance. Whoever can open his heart to such a scene; can feel the impress of sky and shore; of the blue mountains faintly •

traced against the sunset clouds; of the blue lake, with the white lilies folding their petals to slumber on its breast—whoever can feel all this without a thrill of adoration, without the deep sense of a new joy—misses the benediction which Nature gives to all who sincerely love her.

XXI.

AMONG THE LIONS.

I do not know any person who attracts more attention in this crowded resort than the young man from abroad. This young man has a droop to his lily-white hands, a lisp to his speech, a suspicion of rouge upon his cheeks, and of course he wears eyeglasses. More than this, he is said to be desperately in love with an heiress. As I have just remarked, this extraordinary young man attracts more attention than any one whom I have noticed, therefore I place him first upon my list of distinguished individuals.

To be distinguished on account of the name you bear, on account of your learning, your talents, your wealth, or perhaps your wickedness, is all very well; but let any person who is noted for any one of these things mingle with the crowd, and unless he is personally known he will probably pass unnoticed. But to carry your own distinction always with you, quite independent of either circumstances or surroundings; to be always *distinguished* from

the herd, is certainly to possess a pre-eminence of either superiority or ridiculousness over other people, which Nature herself has conferred.

But to return to the young man from abroad. We especially designate him in this manner, not that he is the only young man in Saratoga whose travels have been extensive, but because he is the particular young man who has apparently left all his native Americanism abroad and brought home a quantity of foreign isms in its place. So that, although this young man still speaks his mother tongue, with the aid of a lisp, he has quite ceased to be an American. His conversation is absurdly amusing. He tries to persuade you that he is sick and disgusted with the world; that he would much prefer a savage state of life to this fashionable existence; and that to be dressed in a swallow-tailed coat and to wear white kids is an insufferable torture to him. He wants you to believe that he is a diamond of the first water polished entirely against his will.

And yet, in spite of all this, not a man in Saratoga devotes so much time to his dress as does this poor youth, who declares he abhors it!

Look at him now, all ready for the ball, with his black claw-hammer coat, his black pantaloons, white

cravat, white gloves, and hair carefully parted in the middle. He carries a white silk crush hat to fan himself during his exhaustive efforts in the dance, and wipes his forehead—not his cheeks—languidly with a lace handkerchief.

A man who has caused considerable remark here, from the reputed vastness of his wealth, and the magnificent diamond he wore on his finger—which gem is said to be worth twelve thousand dollars—is another one of the distinguished people.

He was remarkably ugly in appearance, wore an immense black wig, and had a pair of eyes as black as jet. His complexion, too, was suspiciously dark, but he was presumed to be some Spaniard rolling in ingots and gems, and many admiring glances were cast, if not on him, at least upon the valuable diamond which flashed from his finger.

And now, rumor says that the pretended Spaniard is a pure negro, and people are shocked to think they have existed under the same roof and dined at the same table with this sable individual.

We have a most remarkable pair of boots here—worn by a Colonel in the army. Wherever a group of pretty ladies is seated these boots are to be seen wending their way. Now these are such remarkable boots that they take precedence in making the

Colonel a distinguished man over all the brave deeds he has performed, and the dangers he has incurred in tracking the savages over the plains of the far West. I do not know that I can better describe the Colonel's boots than by saying that they have the appearance of having been whittled down to a point, and are in such marked contrast to the broad-toed boots which are worn here that they have certainly distinguished themselves. As these boots are evidently unadapted to the accommodation of five toes apiece, we have concluded that the most of the Colonel's toes lodge out !

At any rate, the Colonel's boots are most remarkable specimens of economy in leather.

And now we come to the "catch of the season," who must always be a distinguished individual. The young man who has figured for some time in this character at Saratoga is handsome, rich as Cræsus, liberal and jolly, lives like a prince, and seems a veritable Monte Christo as far as his wealth is concerned. His apartments in the hotel are fitted up in the most luxurious manner. To pass into them from the other rooms is like stepping from the commonplace, everyday world, into enchanted land. The rooms are fitted up in Oriental style, the floors being spread with beautiful Persian mats, and

the luxurious sofas and chairs covered with the most elegant designs, all wrought with the needle. The doors are hung with curtains of the same richly embroidered material as that which covers the furniture. Pictures and statues, elegant vases and beautiful flowers, a piano, mirrors, and numerous articles of *vertu*, adorn the rooms.

And while other people here are quite content to rest their weary heads upon ordinary couches, this young man has rose-colored dreams under a pink silk spread which is covered with white dotted Swiss, and bordered with ruffles and pink ribbon.

This rich young American rides out every day like a prince in a carriage and four, followed by scores of admiring bright eyes. Alas! such young men are not apt to be matrimonially inclined, and it is to be feared that the Saratoga belles will sigh, and their mammas manœuvre in vain. To be handsome and rich, clever and good-hearted withal, is to be a source of immense attraction in a place like Saratoga.

An interesting, but rather horrible, individual, because so doleful, is a gentleman with a long, pale face, eyes deep set in his head, a sepulchral voice, who has the odd fancy of wearing a death's-head upon his shirt front. And this death's-head is con-

tinnally opening and shutting its ghastly mouth, which horrible operation is performed by means of a small galvanic battery, which its owner carries in his pocket. Now, is not there one evidence of distinguished taste in the way of personal adornment?

Another person well calculated to inspire horror in the minds of those who are fond of taking peeps into the dark mysteries of life, is a man who goes by the familiar name of Bluebeard. He is a widower, with the rather alarming reputation of having spirited away three wives. Rumor says that he is now here in search of a fourth, but he might as well pack his trunk and bid farewell to Saratoga, for the young ladies are all terribly afraid of him, and there is always a sudden disappearance of the belles whenever this ogre approaches.

I must not omit to mention the young politician, who is surely a rising star in the political world, and who has now so fine an opportunity of displaying his capabilities.

He talks like an orator, warms into enthusiasm with his subject, and has already converted all the ladies, and not a small number of the gentleman, to his party. While other young gentlemen are flying through the dance in the ball-room above, this

sedate youth, who seems to have no relish for such frivolity at this momentous time, sits upon the piazza and eloquently discusses his favorite theme.

XXII.

BUZZ.

CONSIDERING the scarcity of the “busy bees” in Saratoga, the incessant hum is certainly something wonderful.

Buzz, buzz, buzz, all day long, from seven o'clock in the morning until after twelve at night—although we would not undertake to mention the individuals who commence their hum in the early morning.

To rise early is one of the impossibilities of a watering-place life.

Heavens! one must have more sleep than a periwinkle—especially as the periwinkle has nothing to do but to wink and blink at the sun, while here one has to dress, and dance, and talk, without even a son worth blinking at, or interesting enough to keep our weary eyes open.

But then it is possible to live upon hope; and have we not a promise from a dear little lady, who is our chaperone *pro tem.*, that a few days more will bring her pet son to Saratoga—a youth who is learned in both ancient and modern lore, a marvellous young

man who can speak every modern tongue, and of course knows how to make love in his own—a youth, in short, who has travelled all over the world and come home, heart whole, to lay his heart at the feet of some charming American.

So that the future has something yet in store, unless, indeed, that bright-eyed young belle, who is this very moment endeavoring to ensnare Fitz Hugh with her fascinations, while we are a martyr to the miserable business of writing letters, should snap him up immediately.

But to return to the *hum*. One cannot help wondering what all these people are so incessantly talking about—for conversation never seems to flag. To pause, to listen, and watch the animated gestures and expressive faces upon every side, one would think that each individual was compressing into a brief half hour's talk all the information he possessed, or that, fearing suddenly to make his exit from this world, he was bent upon having an emphatic "last say."

The gentlemen, of course, have at present but one topic—and that is, politics. Really these sober-headed men call themselves morally sane; but to hear them simply expressing their political opinions, we would fancy them to be newly escaped lunatics.

Talk about fighting duels for love ! It is a wonder that these hot-headed politicians do not blow each other's brains out every day ! We always make it a point to graciously retire from the scene when we see a political breeze rising. It is so disagreeable to sit between a fiery Republican and a crazy Democrat, and wonder what is coming next. Such a position forcibly reminds us of the pathetic state of that little boy who begged his mother to punish him immediately, as anything was better than a state of suspense !

The young people do not trouble their heads very much about political warfare, but their talk embraces an alarming amount of flirtation and love-making in their quiet chats and walks upon the piazza, or while sitting in some retired corner of the parlor. For one of the principal charms of the Congress Hall parlor is its peculiar adaptability to morning flirtations—it has so many cosy little nooks ; such luxurious *têtes-à-têtes* ; such immense *fauteuils* in which one can be buried to every being except the person for whom one wishes at that moment to live.

And then there is the new carpet in this charming parlor—which it is impossible to look upon without having a tinge of romance, for it is truly beautiful,

and always suggestive of floods of moonlight falling upon a profusion of pale roses and lilies.

The one particular belle whom we mentioned above, is to-day a little disconsolate, for she declares that she flirted all yesterday morning with Cræsus in the parlor, endured his nonsense on the piazza after dinner, when she was dying to hear the music, and danced half the evening with him at the hop last night—and yet he hasn't proposed.

What a stupid he is, to be sure !

It is astonishing what a malicious pleasure people seem to take in laughing at the misfortunes of others.

We affect to be very aristocratic here at the Congress, but we enjoy a good hearty laugh sometimes—and but just a moment ago the throng upon the piazza were in a perfect roar.

Laughing at some unlucky individual, of course. The fun was this :

A sedate-looking farmer, wearing a broad-brimmed hat, was driving slowly down the street with a load of watermelons. His horse, a perfect Rozinante in meagreness of flesh and multiplicity of bones, was evidently inspired with a Quixotic idea of acquiring fame, and therefore, just at the moment when the unsuspecting farmer was passing

the hotel, Rozinante walked gravely ahead with the front pair of wheels, leaving the wagon, farmer, and melons in the lurch.

Their sudden descent to the ground, and evident amazement at this unwonted state of affairs, was ludicrous, indeed. The farmer sat, not in his "easy chair," but upon the ground, with his eyes as large as saucers, his broad-brimmed hat rolling away after Rozinante, and the jolly melons careering in every direction like a set of urchins just let loose. The wagon put on a most dejected air, and the front wheels went rolling sedately down the street following the wicked Rozinante. Not a Dulcinea upon the piazza but burst into a merry laugh, and every swain of course followed suit.

There is nothing so contagious as laughter. We might, perhaps, make an exception of flirtation, this latter caprice of human nature having been an epidemic in Saratoga this season.

It is amusing to watch the people as they come down to the springs; to wonder whence they have come, and whither they will go!

You can easily tell the new-comers by the wry faces they make upon tasting the waters, putting down the first glass but half emptied, while the old

habitués quaff their five or six glasses, with the utmost *sang froid*.

What a motley concourse! Hither comes old age seeking, perhaps, renewal of youth; here, too, gather the young, and the beautiful, to add fresh roses to their cheeks; here mingle the sad and the gay; those that count each day lost which brings not some new joy; and those who, looking mournfully into the past, weep over days that are no more! Days

“Dear as remembered kisses after death,
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feigned
On lips that are for others! Deep as love,
Deep as first love, and wild with all regret;
O Death in Life, the days that are no more!”

Ah, were there but some enchanted place within whose shaded groves bubbled the fountain of Eternal Youth! How numberless, as the leaves of the forest, would be those who gathered there!

And, if in some secluded nook, the Fountain of Oblivion offered its dark and mystic waters for a solace to the heart, what an eternity of sorrow would be cast therein!

Well might the ancients have deemed forgetfulness a boon worthy the bestowal of the gods; for there are times, when to forget past griefs, is better than looking forward to new joys.

Still better than all these, if in some sacred grotto the famed Castalian fount were springing, where, kneeling to sip of its pure waters, we might drink in poetic fire and lofty enthusiasm; kindling thoughts and noble aspirations; strength to rise above the bitterness of the world, and courage to overcome the ills and the sorrows of life.

Speaking of the ancient fabled waters, is there not still flowing in some secluded spot, some Lydian stream in which our millionaires have bathed, and thus acquired the power of transmuting all they touch into gold? but finding, alas! like poor King Midas, how little happiness their gold can bring.

XXIII.

FLIRTATIONS.

REALLY, we have not been able to turn our eyes toward any point of the compass without seeing a pair of lovers.

Billers and cooers, flirts and flirtees (that last is original, flirtee meaning the person who is flirted with) are to be met at every step, occupying every corner, strolling through every shaded walk, and monopolizing the best places generally.

It is a great mistake for people to hide in a quiet place to carry on a flirtation.

Better be spoony in public, my dears, for some one is sure to drop your way just at the most interesting stage of the conversation; and to be sitting alone in a corner is always terribly suggestive of love-making—that is, of course, allowing two people to that particular corner.

We have derived much amusement in watching the artful devices of one pair of lovers who for the last week have been vainly endeavoring to delude the world into the belief that they are enjoying a

sort of quiet friendship—without a spark of love in it.

This charming couple take a book, and seeking out some place where they fondly hope and believe that no intruder will venture, they sit holding the book between them, pretending to read.

Now what that book is all about I have not ventured close enough to see. But that the readers are learning love's alphabet from it, and fast coining the mystical letters into words, I have not the slightest doubt.

It is such a nice way of making love, to sit with a handsome young man holding one side of a book—the book being small—pretending to read, and certain that others hear nothing of the whispers let fall between the sentences!

Now, I have had a suspicion that this couple to whom I refer have not the slightest idea of what that book, which seems to form a sort of connecting link between their hearts, contains.

To-day my suspicion was verified, for they were quietly studying the title page, and a person would think that they have hung long enough over that volume to have gathered all its golden treasures of love and poetry long ago.

But no; there they sit, their eyes looking unat-

terable thoughts at each other ; their lips silent but eloquent ; their finger-tips just touching ; while they turn the pages of that unread volume—learning life's sweetest lesson, and yet almost unconscious of it. Ah !

“ There's nothing half so sweet in life
As Love's young dream.”

Another desperate flirtation—not a real, genuine love affair, with a true sentiment in it, but a Saratoga flirtation—has been going on for the last four days in the parlor.

Up in the corner, of course ; the lady sitting half buried in a luxurious chair, flirting her fan gracefully, and flirting her eyes at the same time at her adorer, who sits in front of her.

The young man carries a cane, which helps him to support himself under these trying circumstances.

The young lady has been a belle for more than one season ; she is quite *au fait* in the art of breaking hearts, and she is just as sure of singeing the wings of this poor man-butterfly as she is sure of escaping heart-whole herself.

As for the poor youth in the case, the only hope for him is that he is so much absorbed in his moustache, that it certainly requires an effort on his part

to devote any number of consecutive minutes to any one woman.

Ah, that moustache !

Combed, and curled, and carefully waxed at the ends, what a pathetic monument of manly devotion it is, to be sure !

Some men make an idol of their ambrosial locks ; some devote themselves, not to the matrimonial tie, but to that more important one, the cravat ; some practise in twirling the cane gracefully, and others endeavor to make their eyes beautiful by the incessant smoking of cigars.

But this particular young man has his heart's love in his moustache.

Now, not one man mentioned among the above specimens of the genus is worth one snap for a lover.

Who wants an adorer who is utterly absorbed in himself ?

And we wonder that that practised belle can take any pleasure in flirting so long with a mere moustache !

We have solved the mystery in our own minds, by supposing that she fondly imagines that he is admiring her eyes ; while he just as delusively dreams that she sees or admires nothing but that love of a moustache.

And so both are happy, and this flirtation goes on admirably.

No especial hour is set apart for this Saratoga amusement.

We have times to eat and to sleep ; to dance, to drive, and to walk ; but the flirtations go on as uninterruptedly as the air we breathe.

And so they become epidemic.

The last and the most unexpected flirtation of all, has been carried on by a staid, moderate old bachelor, rich as Cræsus, and a pretty widow.

Now it takes these widows to inveigle a man's heart into invisible meshes, and to capture the poor fellow before he is really aware of it.

That is, if she fairly sets about it ; and so this charming widow has bewitched this forlorn old bachelor into believing that she is an angel disguised, and that he is the one man who could make her happy ; she has charmed him into forgetting all his dread and horror of the sex ; into a serious flirtation which looks very much like ending in a wedding.

Ah well ! so much for the constancy of a man to his principles. For, when a man makes a resolution not to marry, he should not allow himself to be bewitched into matrimony, and then spend his days in reproaching his wife for his folly.

That is the way all old bachelors do.

A favorite spot for a flirtation is down in the park. That is, if the two seats provided for sentimental lovers happen to be unoccupied!

It is not to be supposed that all the flirting accomplished here is done by young people or by unmarried people.

There are any number of married flirts on the carpet. Such sly flirting, too; principally done by the married men. These men keep a sharp lookout for their wives, and do up all the domestic wickedness themselves.

There is plenty of excuse for putting the dear wife out of the way.

Not absolutely drowning or choking her off, but by more delusive means, such as mildly suggesting that the atmosphere of the ball-room might injure her health, or that late hours will steal the roses from her cheek, and thus cause the poor husband a pang.

And so these confiding wives, who have a dread of stepping out and leaving gay widowers behind them, march dutifully off to their rooms, while their odious husbands indulge in numberless flirtations.

I notice that every man who has a pretty wife is inclined to be jealous of her, and we have plenty of green-eyed monsters of husbands in our midst. They

are such interesting creatures—something of the thunder-cloud style. There ought to be a patent glass case in which to imprison pretty wives, for the benefit of these jealous lunatics.

—“My dear,” says one of these devoted husbands to his loving wife, “I am going to town for a few days. You must not think of dancing with that fellow Jones, nor of waltzing with Smith;—indeed, you had better not attend the hops or balls, being unprotected. And I wouldn’t go down to the spring in the morning; nor especially in the evening. And, if you are invited to drive, why you can excuse yourself—write to me every day; and that, with looking after the baby and nurse, will afford you amusement enough until my return.” That is the way these jealous husbands bid an affectionate adieu to the partner of their sorrows, not of their joys, and go to the city to be devoured with curiosity as to what their wives are doing in their absence, and to come back greener-eyed than ever.

We feel sorry for these self-deluded individuals! We should like to drown every one of them in a frog pond, sure that they would come up an army of croakers all arrayed in green coats.

XXIV.

WIDOWERS.

OLD bachelors are to be snubbed, widowers to be considered. Therefore we proceed to consider this species of the *genus homo*, especially that portion who have come hither this season in throngs.

There are times when blackberries are excessively plenty ; likewise widowers. The present is one of those seasons at Saratoga.

Every other man you meet who has passed his first flush of youth, is either a man who has never committed his fate to matrimony, or one who wears a weed.

That is, he is either a bachelor or a widower. And more than that, half of the married men who have escaped from the domestic hearth and come here, pretend to be widowers.

They appear to fancy that because widows are charming, widowers must be enchanting.

In olden times the Romans took their Penates with them, but our modern men seem to especially delight in leaving everything of the sort at home ;

especially their wives! But now for the Saratoga widowers:

First, there is widower Grant, who is extremely rich, and therefore extremely respectable. He is always dressed so neatly and so carefully, that one cannot help wondering how this lonely man is able to take such good care of himself. He has been a widower for ten years. As he has not married the second time it is universally believed that he still mourns.

And Saratoga is such a nice place in which to mourn! It is so charming to stand beside the famous springs, and imagine them to be Lethean waters, wherein all trouble and grief may be lost forever. That is, we cannot help supposing that these waters have this effect, since widowers seem to be blessed with remarkably short memories.

You cannot converse many times with a widow without hearing her mention the late dear departed. She will expatiate upon his merits, his generosity, his virtues—*de mortuis nil nisi bonum*. And thus she often awakens in the heart of her admirer a strong desire to take the dear man's place and to emulate his virtues.

But the widowers! Bah! I have talked with fifty of them, and positively I have never yet heard

the defunct Mrs. Sigma or Madame Alpha even once alluded to.

I have pondered upon the subject, and have come to the conclusion that a widower who remembers the spouse who died a dozen years ago (if he remembers her at all), remembers her as a rather old-fashioned individual, whose image sometimes confronts him amid the brilliant scenes of Saratoga, and who suffers very much in comparison with the gay young belles who flourish here.

In fact, he looks upon her faded memory as we are apt to regard an old-fashioned portrait.

And he puts the old-fashioned portrait one side ; turns its face to the wall, and basks in the smiles of more modern beauties.

And thus it is that he never alludes to the object whom he is believed so devoutly to mourn.

As for the different types of widowers, there is the elderly man, whose hair is gray, whose teeth are nearly all gone, who has a crook in his back, and who is shaky on his knees, and yet who is so self-conceited, that he imagines every pretty woman is trying to inveigle him into perpetrating matrimony once more. Poor man ! he recalls with trembling the lectures and admonitions of days gone by, which his gentle spouse was in the habit

of administering, and is too glad to be free from the harness to put it on again.

Next comes the hale and hearty widower, with his hair tinged with gray; but with a heart as young as ever. The only reason that this man does not get married seems to be that the young ladies snub him, and for the old ones he has no admiration. He forgets that he, himself, is old. He is on the lookout for a young wife, and some foolish girl who is attracted by his money will at last accept him, and cozen the old man into the belief that she loves him.

His after experience of connubial bliss will probably consist in finding that he has a young wife who is fonder of flirting with young men than of stroking his gray whiskers, and rubbing his spectacles, and attending generally to his antiquated wants.

“Do you think you could love an old man?” said a widower of this sort, with his most sentimental air, to Miss Madge.

“No, I thank you,” replied Madge, who thought the question rather personal. “Grandpa is a dear old fellow, but then he cannot dance the ‘dip,’ for he is troubled with gout; he drinks Congress water, which is horrible; he snores terribly; in fact, no

one would think of falling in love with my grandpa—and why should I fall in love with anybody else's grandpa?" Which settled the question.

The most interesting and the most captivating of all widowers is the young widower. If he has one or two children, it is astonishing what a sudden interest all the young ladies take in the "sweet little dears," how much anxiety they express on their account, and how tenderly they sympathize with the young man in his loss.

If the young widower keeps house, how much sorrow is expressed for his lonely condition! and if the house be a brown-stone front, the feminine sympathy is something wonderful to contemplate.

Mammas, too, seize hold of this forlorn young man, and talk in a motherly way of the need his little ones have of maternal care—of the necessity a mansion has of a mistress, etc., etc., and then usually follows a pathetic allusion to the remarkable domestic virtues of their own daughters.

There isn't a young unmarried man who stands a chance of winning when his rival is a handsome, rich young widower.

As for the widows, we have several specimens of feminine mourners here.

They have such an agreeable way of mourning,

too. They wear such dainty toilettes, such airy black dresses, such cunning little widow's caps, for there is no use of being a widow unless you let people know it by wearing a cap. We have jolly widows here whose lives seem perpetual sunbeams; we have fair, languishing widows, sentimental widows, tall and stately widows, widows who are rigid and serene, to whom no man would even venture to propose, and widows whose every glance is a man-trap to catch some unwary heart.

Do not imagine a widow is rich because she spends her season at Saratoga. Diamonds and costly garments are not necessary to a widow's wardrobe, and she may, or may not, have those articles at her command.

It is very easy to borrow a little boy; have one or two stylish mourning dresses most elaborately weeded; a cap or two of white muslin, which is after all but an apology for a cap, being a becoming white bow with two long ends—and come here and pass for a young widow.

Papas who have failed to marry off their daughters after several expensive seasons at Saratoga, and who find them on their hands decidedly *passé*, might humor the widow farce and find it quite economical.

We notice that the rich widows, those who really have all they wish at command—have no idea of getting married again. They enjoy their independence too heartily to relinquish it, which entitles them to be placed upon the list of sensible widows.

XXV.

A BACHELOR'S TRUNKS.

THE young man from abroad has promised to tell us about his love affairs. At present he seems to have, as he pathetically expresses it, a “morning, noon, and night love!”

As I have before remarked, the young lady who is charming in the evening, is not always adorable in the morning, and vice versa, which probably accounts for this young man's diversity of sweet-hearts.

For a time he was desperately taken with the sweet, spirituelle face and beautiful ringlets of a fair lady here. But yesterday he discovered that the ringlets were false, and although the sweet face is still there, it has lost its charm.

But, speaking of the difference between morning and evening, even the young man from abroad wears a new and strange aspect to-day. He is remarkably pale. He has, I fear, been refused by the merry little heiress, and although he has many times whispered his love, he refrains from circulat-



THE BACHELOR'S TRUNK.

ing his cruel disappointment. Poor fellow! It is such a pathetic sight to see him lose his roses, to behold

“Concealment, like a worm i’ the bud,
Feed on his damask cheek!”

But as he has a “love” for each time of the day, he will undoubtedly soon recover.

It is no unusual circumstance for a young lady to visit Saratoga with a half dozen trunks, sundry parcels, bandboxes, etc.

Poodles are, generally, thank fortune! left at home. Probably in view of the fact that plenty of the species may be found here.

But when a gentleman finds three trunks scarcely adequate to containing his wardrobe and “fixings,” the fact certainly demands our attention.

As we have had an amusing account of such a trio of trunks, which belong to a young bachelor, and of their delightful state of disorder—just as might be expected of a solitary man—we cannot help lingering a little while over the troubles of the owner of these same trunks—whom we have dubbed the majestic bachelor.

When he wishes to especially array himself for any particular occasion, as for instance a ball or

hop, he is obliged to call in the assistance of a friend to assist him at his toilette.

The first business of this "full dress" occasion is, of course, to find the garments required.

The friend kindly consents to rummage the three trunks, and being informed that there lurks somewhere in the recesses of those receptacles, a swallow-tail coat, he commences to search—"fishing for bites," as he quaintly expresses it.

He dives into trunk number One. The first thing which appears, is a pair of inexpressibles, considerably too short and too narrow for their owner,—evidently not a dress coat.

The next plunge brings up a pair of boots, crammed with white cravats, and gloves of all colors. Examination reveals the cravats too rumpled for further use, and the gloves are entirely too small for the majestic bachelor, since they bear evidence of having been worn by fair hands alone.

Which is also strongly suggestive of the fact that these gloves are sundry *gages d'amour* which this young man has received. If the young ladies who bestowed them could only see that pair of boots, which has, alas, become their common receptacle! Further search in that trunk brings up no coat of the desired pattern, it being filled to overflowing

- with a nondescript amount of clothing, mixed up with boot-jacks, bowie-knives, Indian pipes, black tresses which must have been clipped from some Indian enchantress, for our friend has roughed it on the frontiers, and, in fact, everything but the required garment.

Trunk No. Two then undergoes inspection.

And, lo! what a revelation is there! Photographs of all styles of feminine beauties—not a horrid man among them!—sweet, tender missives written by fair hands which have been forgotten long ago, and—*mirabile dictu!*—the locks of hair!

Really it would be well for this majestic bachelor to have a little sale of false tresses, for he has an alarming collection of black and brown, of red and golden tresses; in fact, of every shade of hair which ever adorned a woman's head.

Perhaps it is because “woman's hair is like wine,” as he is fond of saying, that he has so carefully treasured up the collection.

It is painful to reflect how this foolish man must have been deceived.

How many of those locks does he suppose really grew upon the heads of their wearers?

And what young lady in these days has ringlets luxuriant enough to spare a lock to each of her lovers?

And then, again, what young lady would care to see her lovelock mingled with such a mass of diverse tresses as were huddled together in this man's trunk? Those photographs, too!

Bah! the fickleness and inconstancy of man!

Every nook and corner of that trunk was filled with these mementos of past affections, a perfect forest of dead leaves; and with these, also, were dozens of embroidered slippers, watch-pockets, smoking-caps, and embroidered cravats, all made by fair fingers, and presented to this thankless man.

But still no dress coat. With a look of despair, this bachelor's friend throws open the third trunk.

To describe what there met his astonished gaze, I will not even attempt. Whoever has peeped into a bachelor's sanctum, or investigated a bachelor's trunk, may conceive of the grand confusion, the utter contempt of the motto, "Everything in its place," which this trunk revealed. Suffice it to say that the trunk was thoroughly searched; then its contents emptied upon the floor—but still no swallow-tail!

The two other trunks shared the same fate, and the bachelor's sanctum presented a fearful picture of disorder. And then, after all, the coat was found

at last, hanging upon a solitary peg behind the door! just like a man's forgetfulness!

And so the majestic bachelor, and his friend, who, by the way, happens to be no other than the young man from abroad, went at last to the ball.

XXVI.

THE TOURNAMENT.

Who would not be in Saratoga and witness a tournament?

Yesterday afternoon, at five o'clock, this long-talked-of affair came off at Glen Mitchell, a short distance from Saratoga. A heavy shower of rain was near spoiling all, but Jupiter Pluvius, evidently pitying the disconsolate knights who, clad in armor, and mounted upon their fiery steeds, were impatiently awaiting the great tilt for the privilege of crowning the fair Queen of Love and Beauty, and, doubtless, remembering his own gushing youth and numerous flirtations, suddenly retreated, and the sun shone once more, and everything was lovely.

Especially the knights, who moved down Broadway, an imposing cortége of warriors, their armor glittering in the sun, and their helmets shading their mighty brows!

Madge says "mighty brows" is stolen from Homer, but it matters not.

Here were faithful aspirants for fame from the

sunny South, from the frigid North, and from under the melting skies of Saratoga.

Every one here will appreciate that term "melting."

At the head of this imposing array rode the Chief Marshal, distinguished for his princely bearing, his soldierly horsemanship, and above all, for the large yellow umbrella which he flaunted in the skies to protect his war-bronzed features from the fervid sun.

On they rode, followed by scores and scores of sparkling bright eyes; on they rode, a goodly company of noble youths, filling the hearts of the stiff old bachelors and forlorn old maidens with envy.

Soberly these elderly individuals scratched their bare-faced heads and wished, alas! to be young once more.

On they rode, followed by a long retinue of splendid equipages filled with the wealth and beauty of the *élite*—by the village people *en masse*, and by every little boy who had chivalry enough to despise the mud pools under his feet, and by every cur who had lungs enough to utter a bark.

Every stage and every hack, filled to overflowing with people on the *qui vive* to witness a tournament, rattled on with incredible speed toward Glen Mitchell.

Arrived at this enchanting spot, we found the grounds already filled with carriages, and the grand stand thronged with fair ladies and their escorts.

Much amusement was created by a small boy—a very small boy—who wore a mighty helmet from which floated a long red plume, and who held a huge trumpet in his hand.

This small personage stood with a nonchalant air upon the top of a fence post, and with a mighty blast of the trumpet heralded the oncoming of each brave knight; and at every powerful blast he blew we feared that the small boy would be suddenly capsized.

Three small rings wound with red were hung at intervals over the course, and each knight was expected to take each of these rings upon his lance as he went by on his flying steed. But he didn't.

The trouble was not that the riders were lacking in skill, but, unfortunately, most of the horses refused to fly!

The obstinate creatures, who evidently had no spark of chivalric feeling in their jaded breasts, went leaping into the air at every sound of the trumpet, splashed around in the fearful mud puddles, or gracefully reared their hind hoofs against the nearest fence!

Really these horses seemed for once inspired with ambition, but it was the same ambition which thrilled that venturesome cow who, once upon a time, is said to have "jumped over the moon!"

These Saratoga coursers objected to spurs; they were afraid of lances; and were obstinately resolved not to wet their precious hoofs in the pools which lay in their proper course; but they tried every puddle to the right of them, and plunged frantically at every fence to the left of them, which made it extremely inconvenient to their gallant riders to carry off the rings.

It is no wonder that these equine fantasies utterly dismayed the gallant knights, and many bitterly repented that they had left their peaceful homes in the sunny South in quest of Northern fame.

But who that is worthy of the name of Knight would give up the combat? The more dangers to be passed, the greater difficulties to be overcome; the greater the victory; and if not a Pegasus was to be found among the steeds, surely there were Bayards, and Ivanhoses, and Quixotes enough among the knights.

And so the tilt commenced, and those whose horses consented to go went flying past the rings,

and cheer after cheer followed the knight who successfully brought back the three upon his lance.

Those who failed were laughed at for their pains, which was not very courteous on the part of the spectators, since some of the best riders were so poorly mounted as to be unable to win any honors at all.

During the tilt there were some splendid displays of horsemanship. The knights who especially distinguished themselves were the Knight of Washington City; the Knight of Fairfax; the Knight of Ontario; the Knight of My Maryland; the Knight of Troy; the Knight of Marlborough; and the Knight of Prince George.

We must not forget to mention that no one assisted the gallant Chief Marshal in the management of that yellow umbrella. The glory of successfully carrying that unique affair through the tournament belongs to him alone.

The grand ball in the evening at the Grand Union, which brought the tournament festivities to a close, was a brilliant success.

The principal event of the evening was the crowning of the Queen of Love and Beauty, and of her six maids of honor, these ladies being selected by the seven victorious knights mentioned above. The

name of each knight and of his chosen lady was gracefully announced, and the honor of crowning the queen was accorded to the Knight of Washington City. And so ended the grand tournament.

We have a troop of wild Mexicans here who give a daily exhibition of lariatting wild cattle, as is the custom on the plains of the far West and in Texas.

In fact there is no dearth of amusements. The only trouble is to find time to taste of every pleasure as it flies.

XXVII.

THE RACES.

MADGE offended Aunt P. almost mortally yesterday by raving over the perfections of *Harry Bassett* from "morn till dewy eve," and never telling her that this splendid creature was *only* a horse.

Of course Aunt Prim would as soon think of reading what she calls George Sand's "*wicked* novels," as of looking over the programme of a race. And as for attending a race—our worthy aunt would expect to be annihilated upon the spot, or at least to be removed from this happy world to one not quite so enjoyable, should she yield to her curiosity to witness such iniquity. But the rest of our party entertained no such fears, since we found the seats devoted to ladies upon the Grand Stand to be covered with *church cushions* and plenty of priests and members of their congregations just as intent as we were upon seeing the evils of horse-racing.

Even Aunt Prim might have been satisfied to have found herself in such respectable society.

As for the immorality of betting, I am sorry to say that several ladies were provided with little books and pencils, which they kept in constant use, and a profusion of greenbacks passed through their white, jewelled fingers during the races.

If ladies will wager money upon a race, would it not be better to settle the matter in private, and not to flaunt their ill-gotten gains before the public gaze?

We saw one pert little Miss, about twelve years old, going around among her friends with a small book in her hand and taking all the odds she could gather against Barney Williams.

These little bets seemed mostly to be entered as kid gloves, perfumery, or some such trifles. In the course of conversation little Miss proved herself to be quite as much at home in the odd vernacular of the race-course as was her papa.

Really, it is wonderful to mark the progressive spirit of the rising generation in this age!

The only wickedness worthy to be recorded which Madge perpetrated at the races was that of risking one of her brown curls upon Harry Bassett, at the earnest solicitation of the Colonel.

I did not hear the Colonel's wager, but I have no doubt his heart was at stake.

He lost, of course.

Harry Bassett won the Kenner stakes—and it was a splendid sight to see this noble animal before the race began, careering madly upon the turf, with his nostrils expanded, his eyes flashing fire, and almost unmanageable in the hands of his rider, so eager was he to enter the contest. In fact he succeeded once in his wild rearing and plunging to send the jockey flying over his head, but the jockey was evidently used to such playful tricks and did not mind it.

Why don't they dress the jockeys in a becoming manner?

Such a grotesque-looking group of black imps arrayed in faded yellow, green, or blue costumes, would surely awaken the merriment of the spectators were they not so much absorbed with interest in the horses.

The third race—the summer handicap—occasioned considerable discussion in our little party.

We all undertook to explain the term “handicap.”

Madge thought the horses probably wore “caps,” of course of the latest style! Fitz Hugh said they passed the cap around to collect money when this race was over; but the Colonel, who appeared, after

all, to be the most perfectly *au fait* in wickedness, finally explained the matter.

I am not so sure, however, that we fully understand it yet.

The steeple-chase which followed was both novel and exciting. How the horses went flying along over the green turf, leaping hedges and stone walls with the speed of an arrow; and clearing the pools of water beyond the walls, without so much as wetting their flying hoofs. Every one looked on in a state of breathless excitement.

Madge became utterly oblivious of the Colonel. Fitz Hugh sighed in vain, and tried his best to have revenge in getting up a flirtation with the lady who sat behind him.

Probably, however, his admiration of her bright eyes dropped to zero when she exclaimed, as a jockey went flying over his horse's head:

“Dear me! is he *hurted*?”

The way those horses threw their riders as they went on their mad gallop over the hedges was something to be wondered at, as well as the sudden dexterity with which the jockeys remounted and rushed on to the goal.

But races are cruel things, wicked things, despite

the interest and the excitement they never fail to arouse.

Think of poor Longfellow, that splendid animal, flying over the turf swift as any bird, with his proud carriage of head, with his flashing eyes so full of intelligence and power—a horse that rivalled in beauty and speed the famous Kochlani breed of the far East, descendants of King Solomon's swiftest coursers—Longfellow but the day before yesterday king of the turf, no other daring to dispute his well-earned honors with him, and yesterday, dragging his feeble limbs from the course, drooping his head mournfully as he went, the wreck of the beauty and strength he was but an hour before, driven to the death for sordid gold, and all to amuse a gaping, wondering crowd! And this is why racing is so cruel. Not satisfied with a horse which accomplishes marvels of strength and speed, his owner must test his utmost powers of endurance, and the poor brute is lashed to a cruel death.

Truly, who thinks of making so much of a moment of time as the owner of a fleet racer?

It does seem as though the intelligence of a brute often surpassed that of his master.

Fifty thousand dollars was refused this week for

this superb Longfellow, and to-day he is worth comparatively nothing.

The great four-mile dash between Longfellow and Helmbold was the most exciting race of the season, having been long talked of, and thousands of people were upon the ground to witness it.

In the first three miles around Longfellow kept ahead of his rival, with his magnificent strides, which seemed to spurn the brown earth; but on the last mile his endurance gave way, and Helmbold easily passed him, and reached the goal amid a burst of overwhelming cheers.

Hundreds of caps went flying up in the air, and the little darkies—who were as thick as blackberries in July, and who sat perched like so many “blackbirds all in a row” upon the white fences—leaped from their position as the horses came round upon the home stretch, and went rolling over and over on the grass in an extravagance of joy.

I have no patience with beautiful Maude, who sat near us at the races. She was so engrossed with the soft words and tender glances of young Limber-flap, that she failed altogether to catch the spirit of the hour, and the horses might have had wings like

Pegasus, and their riders have been dressed in the hues of the rainbow, without absorbing Miss Maude to the degree of forgetfulness of her new lover.

We drove back from the race-course over Lake Avenue, which has been so graphically described as the avenue with "three elegant rows of shade trees." We saw those trees—barren sticks about ten feet high, with a little bunch of leaves on their tops, with not enough verdure to shelter a bird, and with a possible shade ten years off.

Yet over this smooth, wide road, there is a constant rolling of elegant equipages; and what would become of the display of costly toilettes if there were too many trees?

For a truly delightful drive give me some narrow winding road where the tall forest trees cast dark shadows over the way, imparting a dim, mysterious look to the depths beyond them, and with little glimpses of running brooks flashing back the few sunbeams they catch between the thick foliage.

Then the birds flitting from bough to bough, twittering their love-songs with no fear of listeners, and the bright-eyed squirrels peeping out upon you from the roadside, as if in wonder that intruders should venture so near their haunts.

XXVIII.

PLYING THE NEEDLE.

NOTING the remarkable efforts of Miss Industry upon the piazza after dinner, as she weaves bright colors upon the canvas with her needle, reminds me that when I was a "wee bit of a girl," in short frocks and pinafores, Aunt Prim exerted her best endeavors, and I have no doubt tried her patience to the utmost, in teaching me to sew. It was a tiresome task, I remember well, for hemming handkerchiefs and darning stockings always failed to awaken my childish enthusiasm.

It was so much easier and pleasanter to ramble through bushes and briars, and clamber over fences, to the serious detriment of aprons and dresses, than it was to do penance afterward by having to mend them.

It was one of Aunt Prim's favorite theories that no girl was fit to get married who could not darn a stocking neatly ; and so, as I was expected to grow up and attain the old-fashioned goal of womanly

ambition—to be married—I was early initiated into the mysterious art of darning.

But this employment merited and awakened my everlasting disgust when the committee of a county fair, having offered a prize for the best specimen of needle-work to be displayed in a pair of darned stockings, and these to be done by an *unmarried* lady, I timidly sent in my specimen, which everybody declared was “beautifully done,” and I flattered myself that I was sure to obtain the prize, when lo! an officious old maid—fifty years old—flourished her mended hose triumphantly before that committee and bore away the prize.

I never could discover the justice of this decision—for if that woman did happen to be unmarried, I’m sure she was old enough to have been married long before.

I cannot forget that while acquiring the art of the needle, I often felt inclined to wish all the men who made needles were enjoying themselves together at the bottom of the Red Sea.

How the thread would snarl, the seams would pucker, and how I, losing all patience, would commence to cry, and the tears, blinding my eyes, would thrust the sharp needle into my little fingers instead of into the wayward muslin.

And there was Aunt Prim, always enjoining upon me: "Sophie, my child, be sure to fasten the threads well, and to *hide the knot*."

And then, with a skilful turn of the needle, she would thrust the ugly knot under the delicate hem, and all would appear smooth and neat. I wondered how she did it, for I never could do it in those days.

The days of hand-sewing, thank Heaven, are almost over. No longer shall woman be enslaved to that cruel little despot, the needle—that miserable tyrant, which stitched, and stitched her very soul out of Paradise!

Now, the sewing-machine, that dearest of modern Penates, which "has never a soul to save," does the tiresome work of the needle; and, arguing from the constant inventions intended to dispense with human labor, by and by we shall have nothing to do with ruffles and tucks, except to wear them. Those days, I think, will be the dawning of the millennium—at least to womankind.

But, though no longer I sit beside Aunt Prim learning to "hide the knot," there are still knots to be hidden and threads to be fastened well.

What is a besetting sin but a *knot*, which requires to be concealed and smoothed away from our lives?

What is the first footstep toward evil, but a

loosened thread, which, unless carefully secured, will rip and ravel until all is lost ?

Envy, pride, malice, and a thousand other sins of petty magnitude, are all knots in human nature—the snags which roughen the otherwise smooth current of life.

There is Nettie Ray, who is one of the loveliest girls to be met. Her eyes are as radiant as two stars ; her dear little head is “all running over with curls,” and the lily and the rose are blended in her complexion ; the dimples play at hide and seek around her dainty little mouth when she smiles—and Nettie Ray smiles often, but not *always*. There is, alas ! an ugly knot in Nettie’s character which it would be well if she could forever hide.

She has an unhappy way of allowing her temper to “run away with her ;” of letting the fire of angry passion burn until it consumes all the sweet buds of love and affection which cluster around her. And when the tempest of anger has sway over her, Nettie Ray is lovely no longer.

Perhaps she had no Aunt Prim when she was a child, to teach her how to hide the knot.

And there is old Father Mildew. He has the blindest temper in the world, but he is the most penurious old man who ever begrudged taking a

step because it wore out shoe leather. For him there is no joy so sweet as counting his gold.

He views the ever-increasing pile with exquisite delight, and his long, thin fingers tremble with eagerness as he places coin upon coin and note upon note. Father Mildew is a faithful attendant at church, and regards the unrighteous ones of this world with holy horror.

He is a devotee, it is true, but to all outward appearance his god is Mammon. Christian though he flatters himself to be, Father Mildew would probably experience a keen pang of regret if required to leave this world for the untold joys of heaven, since he could not carry his treasure with him. Poor old man! He fancies that the world is blind to his avariciousness. But it is every day displayed; displayed by his poor wife and daughters, who go so shabbily dressed, and who are obliged to eke out their existence with the utmost economy. His children, who, after all, must some day inherit all his wealth, are scantily fed, scantily dressed, and scantily educated.

The rich mines of learning, the treasures of art, the paths of culture which lead to eminence or fame are closed to them, since their father's griping hand

withholds the gold which might enrich their minds and hearts.

No concerts, no lectures, no delightful wanderings through galleries of art for those young people.

No piano in the house, no painting, scarcely an engraving—and, as for books, Father Mildew was never known to purchase anything in that line except a ledger.

The daily life of such a family is necessarily cold and hard, and, instead of experiencing the loving care of a generous father, Father Mildew's children are taught that they should be thankful for their bread and butter, and expect nothing more.

And so, while the family are starving soul and body, the pile of gold increases. But every day lessens the short distance between that old man and the grave. Father Mildew must relinquish his treasure at last and go the way of all mankind.

The probability of such an event has, it would seem, occurred to his mind, since it is really true that in a dark corner of his house lies the coffin which he purchased for himself, and which, so says the world, he purchased after long haggling and parleying, for *fifty cents less than the price*, because it had a crack in it.

It will readily be supposed, that after he is gone,

his children—who have never been taught to control money—will forget everything but the new-found pleasure of spending it, and so the carefully hoarded savings will after all be wasted.

Had old Father Mildew been more liberal; had he shown his children that there is more virtue in spending wisely than in hoarding foolishly, had they received the advantages which he was fully able to give them, then—as Aunt Prim would say—“the threads would have been fastened well,” and his wealth would not be squandered, like stitches which drop, one after another, until all are gone.

The very opposite of the vice of avarice, as exhibited in meagreness of life and closeness of purse, is the inordinate love of display evinced by some people.

With them every dollar is spread out in an almost marvellous way, until the absurd world allows itself to be really dazzled by what is, after all, but the thinnest spreading of gold over a mass of emptiness and deceit!

What useless heart-burnings—what little jealousies and rankling sorrows, sting like venomous serpents in this vain strife of folly.

The truest happiness is the most unselfish. An unselfish action never fails to bring more pleasure

than one which springs from a selfish motive. A good deed is a pebble thrown into the stream of life. The pebble cast into the stream causes the eddying waves to form a circle which widens and widens until it is lost in the vast deeps of the ocean.

So the good deed extends its influence through the world in a circle which forever increases until it touches the shores of the Infinite, and there receives its reward.

The sum of life is made up of little things. It is the petty sins, rather than great crimes, which cause the greater portion of the world's unhappiness. The everyday follies which need to be overcome, the little knots which ruffle our tempers, are those which embitter our lives. If these could be conquered, and laid away out of sight forever, what a comfortable world this would be to live in !

XXIX.

HINTS TO HUSBANDS.

It is always amusing to hear the sage philosophers among those who style themselves the "lords of creation," prate about the *quiet life of woman*!

I should like any one of them to take his book, his pen, or his ledger, and seat himself for one hour in the nursery!

I should like to have a *carte de visite* of the man who would patiently endure to be shut up for one whole day in a room with five or six healthy, active, romping children.

That picture should have a most honored place in my album!

You may talk of the bustle of business, of the noise of the outer world, and the quiet precincts of home, but I have never yet listened to a *racket* which could compare with the shouting, laughing, wrangling, and screaming of half a dozen children shut up in that fabled *quiet home*.

There is the incessant pattering of little feet; the clashing and clattering of dilapidated toys; the

creaking of chairs as they perform the various duties of both horses and cars; the upsetting of tables; the tearing of clothes and the bursting of buttons; the loud lamentations over bumped heads and injured noses; and, chiming in with all this, are the fearful cries or endless wailing of "the baby" who is teething!

And over this modern Bedlam usually presides some patient, weary mother, whose unstrung nerves and throbbing head betoken anything but a *quiet* life.

Now, any man who would endure this overpowering din, this woman's quiet, during the short time of one revolution of the earth upon its axis, and preserve his serenity of mind undisturbed, ought to receive a gold medal, and to be held up forever as a model for all husbands and fathers to imitate.

And yet nearly every mother of a family who has children to be proud of—for all bright, healthy children are sure to be boisterous—is obliged to endure this noise and confusion every day, while no one thinks of rewarding her for enduring it patiently!

If the burden becomes intolerable, and she frets, or loses her temper, the poor woman is said to be *cross*, or a *scold*.

It is not to be wondered at, perhaps, that men

are inclined to picture home as a quiet place. After the business of the day is over, the *pater-familias* seeks his fireside. The roguish little ones who from dawn to nightfall have been the very embodiment of perpetual motion, are at last tired of play, and one by one drop off into slumber. Even the baby, having exhausted himself with fretfulness, shuts his eyes for a short nap, wherewith to recruit the strength of his lungs for the next waking hours.

The mother sits quietly mending the torn little garments which the sleepers have cast off, and the father looks over his evening paper, or smokes his cigar, in blissful repose before the cheerful fire.

No wonder the father fancies that home is a *quiet* place!

But there must be daylight as well as gaslight for viewing impartially the scenes around the domestic hearth.

Surely woman needs no reproaches for wishing to enlarge her sphere.

I think it would do no harm if every wife who has been making an angel of herself for an indefinite period of time; who has been an all-enduring, long-suffering, devoted martyr to her husband's caprices, should change her tactics for a time.

Not but that all wives should endeavor to be good wives, but then husbands are so apt to "entertain angels unawares!" They should be allowed to perceive the difference between home with the angel and home without her, lest they neglect to duly appreciate the divinity of the household.

Now, husbands think nothing of taking themselves off for a few days, or even longer, by way of recreation and amusement, and it passes my comprehension entirely, why a wife should be always expected to stay at home, tied to the self-same spot forever by invisible chains which are as binding as were the laws of the Medes and Persians.

Why should the wife and mother go about from day to day, bearing always her burden of toil and care, and never laying it aside?

Why should she not have the liberty to escape from thralldom once in a while as well as her husband?

This is a good thing to contemplate, ye fathers and husbands who are already planning your little summer vacations.

Don't go away and leave your wives at home!

If you are a man of laborious pursuits, you may need rest and relief from care, but your wife needs it also.

The fresh air of the country, the relaxation from toil, or the gayety of the watering-place, which inspires you with new life and new hope, will also bring back the roses to your wife's pale cheek, and the old gleam of lovelight to her eyes.

Don't go away selfishly to enjoy yourself, and leave your wife fretting and toiling at home.

"All work and no play, makes Jack a dull boy."

This is an old maxim and a true one. Yet how plainly it shows upon the face of it that it was first written by some selfish specimen of the *genus* man! Not one word is said of "Jack's" mother, sister, or wife. As if "Jack" were the only person of sufficient importance to be considered, and as if Susie or Mollie were not quite as likely to be made "dull" by overwork, as "Jack"!

But the world was not made solely for "Jack's" amusement and comfort, and it is quite time he knew it.

Suppose the mistress of the family should take it into her head to follow the example of her husband, and leave home for a two or three days' visit? She upsets the house for a general sweeping or cleaning, and then forgets to readjust it!

She leaves the baby in the cradle with full liberty

to develop his lungs, according to the baby's pet method of performing that process!

She gives the elder children plenty of bread and syrup with which to appease their appetites; puts on the dinner pot, but neglects the fire; and disappears a couple of hours before papa's return.

Would not there be a funny scene when that dear man comes home?

"My dears," he would say to the molasses-ornamented cherubs of his hearth, "where is your ma?"

"Dawn for a wisit!" lisps two-year old.

"Indeed!" says papa, wonderingly.

"I want my dinner!" clamors the eldest.

"My hands all 'ticky!" says two-year old, vainly endeavoring to clean the little fingers on his pinafore, to the decided embellishment of that garment.

"Aa—aa—aa! Boo—oo—oo!" shrieks the baby in the cradle.

Papa picks up the baby with a despairing look upon his face, and looks into the dinner pot.

Everything placid there! No water bubbling and sputtering because it is required to boil!

Papa remembers the old adage which says: "A watched pot never boils;" and replacing the cover, he looks into the stove.

Everything quiet there also. Not the slightest trace of red-hot, angry coals. Mamma did not mean that the children should burn themselves on that stove.

Papa next goes into the larder, carrying the baby, and followed by the other juveniles, and inspired with the fond hope of finding some delicious bits there in the shape of "cold victuals!"

Not a pie—nor cake—not even a cold potato meets his expectant gaze!

And then this much-injured, aggrieved man betakes himself back to his desolate hearth, followed by all the syrup-sweetened cherubs—and longing for the return of her who alone can bring order to this chaotic home.

He fully realizes the discomforts of "home without a mother!"

There is a painful void in the wonted place of that sweet feminine magician, who always manages to have everything so cosy and comfortable, and who casts over all the halo of her own sunny presence. Yet, somehow or other, she is seldom appreciated until she disappears from the fireside—when presto! how great the change!

This state of affairs might seem rather hard at first sight, but then it is a pity not to give husbands the opportunity of being angelic once in a while!

What husband ever thinks of asking his wife if he can leave home? And why should not the wife have the same liberty? It would afford such a refreshing variety to the hum-drum monotony of everyday life, to let the wife break a few of the domestic jars, while the husband meekly picks up the pieces, with only a "Don't, my dear!"

Husbands should learn to be patient and lamb-like as well as wives.

The would-be rulers of this world have appointed separate paths for man and woman. The public highway which leads to wealth or fame is for man; the cool, sequestered vale for woman. Man is made to toil in the full light of the sun; woman to bloom in the shade. Blue violets and golden buttercups are supposed to be ever springing up under woman's feet, which she has only to stoop to gather in her hand—so the poets say. But the thorns which so cruelly pierce her feet, the bramble-bushes which tear her delicate hands, and the reptiles which creep through the shining grass, awaiting their opportunity to sting, are utterly ignored.

Nothing is said of the thunder-clouds which lower over this *quiet path* for woman. Possibly it is supposed that man's affection will afford a screen from these.

Bah! there is more virtue in one good, blue cotton umbrella for protection from the storm than in a man's love! And more reliance is to be placed in it, too.

Women are continually warned not to leave their own peculiar walk in life for the rough pathway of man.

But if the public highway be paved with stones, men certainly have amused themselves with the boyish pastime of pitching them, since they have fallen most plentifully along the green, quiet path for woman!

If men would only desist from this destructive and perilous amusement, and no longer ruthlessly crush the violets and buttercups that spring up around a woman's feet with rough cobble stones, the Garden of Eden might bloom again, and woman have no need to hurl back the pebbles at her assailants and cry out for the protection of her violets and buttercups!

There are few women, I may venture to say, but would willingly choose the sphere of a *quiet home* to that of any other; few but would prefer the green, sequestered vale of life, if through it lay the paths of love and pleasantness and peace!

XXX.

ALL ABOUT BONNETS.

IF any one for a moment supposes that a lady's bonnet has nothing to do with the progression of the age, or that its tiny weight can have no possible bearing upon the great questions of the day, that person is very much mistaken.

Women need ask no better signal of their coming release from thralldom than that displayed by the modern "love of a bonnet." Every rose-bud that nestles above beauty's fair brow; every ribbon that flutters in the breeze, is the herald of approaching victory.

To prove all this, and to refute the wiseacres who aver that the present is by no means equal to the past, I have only to bring to mind that revolutionary relic of my sainted great-grandmother, which lies at home in a neglected corner, with the dust of a century upon its expansive brim and faded flowers, and to flourish triumphantly beside it my last new bonnet.

This bonnet of mine, it is true, is not much to

speak of in the way of size ; only a red rose peeping out from a bit of lace, a scrap of velvet, and two long fluttering blue ribbons, just to give the whole an air of reality—that is all.

There are people who spend their precious time in lamenting the past, while they utterly ignore the blessings of the present.

But to me, this jaunty little hat, fresh from the hands of the milliner, is an inestimable joy when compared to the bonnet of my earliest recollections.

The bonnet of my childhood !

Ah, if there be lurking in my gentle heart one atom of implacable animosity, it is against that bonnet.

How I wish that I could instantaneously photograph upon the “ mind’s eye ” of the reader my remarkable personal appearance as I appeared in the head-gear of that period.

That is, the bonnet appeared, but as for myself, the only clue to my identity was to be found in a pair of small shoes, a ruffle or two, and the hem of an apron.

I was completely enveloped in the embrace of my direst foe—a foe hated as profoundly as the memory of Bluebeard, and dreaded almost as much as the terrible bears, which I firmly believed were

lurking in unseen places, ready at any moment to spring out and devour naughty little girls.

That bonnet stood between me and heaven ; for what glimpses could I catch of the bright blue sky above when lost in its bewildering depths ?

It also initiated me in the wicked art of deception by leading into irresistible temptation, for the instant I escaped far enough from home to avoid the ever-watchful maternal eye, that bonnet came suddenly off from my head, and had it been gifted with speech it might have complained loudly of violence.

But the half of my tribulations would fail to be realized did I omit to describe this distasteful affair.

It was made of strips of pasteboard about a foot in length, which were so arranged as to project over the face. These were covered with blue lawn, and a huge ruffle was added to the front by way of imparting an artistic finish. A long cape was attached to protect my neck and arms from the fervor of the sun.

People in those days had evidently no faith in the sun-cure.

It would be impossible to give the exact length of that bonnet-cape, for "still the wonder grew ;" since, for every inch added to my stature, my

mother added an inch to that cape, so that I seemed destined never to escape from its tyranny.

How I envied my brother Fred the jaunty little cap which rested so lightly on his golden curls.

If anything chanced to awaken his boyish enthusiasm, it was but the work of an instant to snatch that cap from his head and to send it far up into the air, as he shouted "hurrah! hurrah!" If I attempted to follow his example, even though I was successful in untying a perplexing pair of strings firmly fastened under my chin, I was doomed to disappointment, for that pasteboard iniquity always refused to soar.

It needed nothing more than the sight of Fred's cap careering in the air to early instil into my mind a keen sense of the inequality between the sexes, and of the cruel wrongs we poor feminines had to endure.

The very fact that Fred would have scouted the idea of appearing in a girl's bonnet was enough to condemn it. I have seen a boy baby of less than two years rebel furiously at having a sun-bonnet tied under his dimpled chin by his anxious mamma.

But I never saw an embryo belle behave in like manner. Little girls usually accept their fate with the most commendable meekness.

Why shouldn't Fred be compelled to grope his way about the garden, over high fences, and to climb trees in a huge sun-bonnet as well as I?

For over fences and up the trees I followed Fred, at the imminent risk, however, of suddenly departing from this world.

Not that I was unadapted by nature for performing these gymnastic feats as well as my brother, but because I was hampered and hedged in by a tiresome lot of ruffles and flounces, which were not to be torn, and my vision was sadly obscured by an intervening wall of pasteboard.

The only wonder is that I escaped being a youthful martyr to fashion, and reached the years of maturity with unbroken limbs.

Why I wore sun-bonnets while Fred rejoiced in caps was a perplexing problem which I often resolved in my mind without arriving at any satisfactory conclusion.

At last the matter was made plain to me. I discovered that it was my mother's especial solicitude that my complexion should be untouched by the sun or the wind.

If the sun kissed Fred's rosy cheeks with ardor, it only added to his beauty, and it was remarked what a lovely color he had.

But as for poor me, what greater misfortune could happen to a girl than to be browned and freckled by the sun?

Nut-brown maids were not at all in favor with those who had the care of my childhood, and so I was compelled to grope my melancholy way out of doors, almost hidden from the light—that some day, far off in the future, somebody else’s “brother Fred” might find me as fair as a lily, with a complexion of roses and cream, and so surrender his heart at once.

But as I had no ambition in those days for the future conquests I was intended to make, and had not the slightest desire to rival the lily or the snow in whiteness, was it any wonder that I sometimes rebelled?

The pasteboard sun-bonnet was doleful enough in a fresh state, but it reached its climax of horrors when the paper lost its stiffness, and every adverse wind flapped it defiantly in my face.

At last I positively refused to submit to this inquisition any longer, and as I remained firm, fashion had to change.

The next contrivance which was devised to keep me in durance vile by debarring my eyes from all

but slight glimpses of either heaven or earth, was a gingham bonnet gathered over large cords.

This also was finished around the front with a ruffle, and displayed the inevitable cape.

The experience of later years has often led me to wonder if ruffles had not a great deal to do with the insipidity of women—a man's attire is so plain, while a woman's garment is covered with superfluous nonsense. While so much adornment is lavished upon the outer self, it would not be strange if the intelligence was sometimes sadly neglected.

Having received the last touch of the needle, this new miracle of womanly skill was starched to its utmost capacity and ironed in the laundress' very best style.

With this affair securely tied upon my rebellious head, I set forth for a ramble with Fred.

Alas! and alas! The four winds of heaven seemed to have broken loose for the especial purpose of howling inside of that bonnet.

How they whistled and shrieked in their shrillest tones about my ears, inside of that terrible bonnet, which creaked and rattled in response as if with the wildest joy!

I took it off and viewed it with a new dismay.

I tried to persuade Fred to change his old cap for

my new bonnet; but, of course, Fred wouldn't. In fact, I never could discover in Fred the slightest desire to possess a bonnet, although I often sounded him upon the subject.

With a feeling that bordered upon the sublimity of despair, I replaced the hateful covering upon my head. And, while I stood irresolute as to the first defensive step I should take in regard to this new grievance, a kindly gust of wind carried the bonnet off from my head and left it in the middle of a tub-full of water.

No one could ever shake my belief in providential interferences after that.

How the pride and stiff pomposity of that bit of gingham suddenly collapsed in the water, until it became a limp, flimsy rag which nobody had need to fear. The poor thing was evidently out of its element.

I rubbed my hands with childish glee at this mishap, and actually borrowed Fred's cap to toss in the air, the better to express my joy at the end of this new trouble.

But the end was not yet come, for lo! upon the morrow, the bonnet, having undergone some mysterious process in the kitchen, reappeared "as good as new."

Its first exploit in the water, however, did not escape my mind, and one day when I went fishing with Fred, somehow—accidentally, of course—that bonnet fell into the stream and floated beyond our reach out towards the sea. I have often reflected upon its ultimate fate, since it seemed destined to have a career. And, being of a poetic turn of mind, I composed a sonnet upon the occasion, which suggested that my persecutor had been snatched up as a prize by some luckless mermaid. I only hope it did not break her heart!

I also wrote a lament for its departure, prompted by the same spirit of grief which impels people sometimes to express sorrow for the loss of a friend whom they would by no means bring back to this world.

The only advantage I ever could discover in the old-fashioned sun-bonnet was, that if any presumptuous schoolboy ever felt tempted to give his little sweetheart a kiss, that bonnet most effectually opposed him.

But I turn from my own grievances to consider the immense affair which once shaded the sweet face of my grandmother at eighteen, and which maintained its dignity under the euphonious title of “poke-bonnet.”

Imagine, for a moment, a bevy of Saratoga belles wearing poke-bonnets! How many times have I reverently taken this quaint old bonnet down from its nook in the closet, and brushing away the dust, viewed it with melancholy reflection!

It is made of the finest Leghorn, with a brim a foot wide, shaped so as to expand scuttle-fashion over the face. This brim is backed by a crown which rises almost to a peak, and is surmounted with a bunch of faded flowers. Upon the side of this odd-looking crown there still hangs a bunch of rumpled ribbons of the palest blue.

Ah, those faded flowers! How eloquently do they speak of beauty perished long ago! Of bright eyes which once glanced out from this queer old bonnet, and of clustering curls which strayed beneath it.

And then the tattered ribbons, with just enough of blue left in their silken shreds to suggest the heaven of youth and love, of hope and joy, which once made sunshine in an earthly home, but which have passed long since into that summer land, where the flowers never fade, and the sky is always blue.

There is a world of sweet memories, of quaint old fancies, and poetic dreams, clustering around this relic of the past. No doubt this poke-bonnet,

which would now awaken the risibilities of any modern belle, was in its day considered to be a marvel of loveliness, and its wearer may have made her appearance at church in the new bonnet with some trepidation of soul, and a feeling that she was making too great a display of finery for the holy place.

But the bonnet was certainly able to conceal her embarrassment, and must have interposed a formidable obstacle to the ardent glances of admiring swains.

Besides, it was a great preservative to the complexion, and veils and parasols could not have been the essentials to a lady's toilette in the olden time which they now are.

One poke-bonnet is funny enough to contemplate, but imagine a whole congregation of poke-bonnets!

How it steals away from the romance of the olden love-tales, when we imagine the belles and beaux who figured in them attired in the quaint costumes of the last century.

Think of Burns wooing his Highland Mary with her sweet face hidden in a poke-bonnet! "I'm sitting on the stile, Mary," was well enough for a man to sing, but how could he expect his innamorata to cross that stile to sit beside him, arrayed in all the fasci-

nation of her best bonnet, without incurring the imminent risk of falling and breaking her pretty neck?

As well might my mother have expected me in my early days to clamber over fences and up trees, with a sun-bonnet flapping in my eyes, without tearing my dress, or bringing everlasting woe to my be-ruffled aprons.

Probably I was not expected to emulate my brother Fred in his various hazardous feats, such as climbing trees, perching upon the topmost peak of the barn-roof, or walking upon the brink of the house-top, with nothing between him and heaven, except a fair chance of his suddenly quitting this mundane sphere.

But I followed as closely in his footsteps as it was possible to do, and wherever I failed of success, or met with some mishap, the blame might all have been laid upon that officious bonnet.

Another specimen of curious millinery device of much later date than that in which the poke-bonnet reigned supreme, is still hoarded up among my treasures of antiquity.

This is a brown silk calash, which was the pride of my mother's heart at eighteen. This buggy-top arrangement is over a foot in height; the silk is

puffed over curved reeds ; the front is finished with a double box-plaiting of ribbon, and a large ribbon bow is placed in the centre of the back. The whole affair resembles the top of an old-fashioned chaise, and it is drawn down over the face with a narrow ribbon attached, just as the carriage-top projects over toward the dashboard.

Women who wore these bonnets must have appeared exceedingly tall, since they sometimes added to the height of the calash, by placing a towering bouquet of flowers upon the extreme top of the crown.

A tall woman in a calash must have been a more fruitful source of terror to the sterner sex than any modern advocate of woman's rights arrayed in all the bewitching paraphernalia of panier, chignon, high-heeled shoes, parasol, gloves, fan, to say nothing of the jaunty little hat of the period, could possibly be.

But the poke-bonnet, the forbidding calash, and even the huge sun-bonnet which cast its lengthened shadow over my childish days, are happily all numbered among the things that were.

I can even wear Fred's hat now, or one so like it in form and color that there is but little difference, without exciting the least remark. But, alas ! there is still the bitter drop left in the cup, for in the stately promenade on the avenue, or down Broad-

way, there are no grand old trees full of happy birds, twittering their love-songs in a manner which used to say, "Come up and be one of us!" to me. And there are no high fences in the city crossing one's path with a defiant air, as if daring one to pass them.

Besides, I am afraid that I have lost my relish for such things; that the sombre air of the town has tamed the squirrel-like propensities of earlier years, which were at once the terror of my mother, and the delight of mischievous brother Fred. And as I look into the faces of the little girls of the present day, I can discover no longing for the adventures and exploits which delighted my own childhood.

Children who spend one part of the year in a crowded city, and the rest at a fashionable watering-place, live only half a child's life. In fact, there are no *real* children in fashionable society, but miniature men and women. Little girls who walk through the streets with a dignified air, attired as elegantly as their mammas, would be shocked at the mere idea of tearing their clothes!

And little boys, who have discarded "jackets" for manly vests and coats; who wear watches, flourish canes, smoke cigars, and talk politics, with an important air, are above all childish folly.

Who would ever dream of these children clambering over fences, climbing trees, wading barefooted through the brooks, or making mud pies !

We can well bid adieu to the bonnets of the past generation ; they were too much for us ; but it would be well to keep the simple, fun-loving, old-fashioned children.

XXXI.

A NOVEL DREAM.

I HAVE just finished "Warwick." And, alas! wrapped in the fancies which, despite the critics, that fascinating novel has enveloped me, the everyday world has become tame and excessively commonplace. Aunt Prim says that I have lost my senses, and Madge declares that I am bewitched. And really, speaking in the *Warwickian* sense, I have become like those people who, feasting upon the honey of Trebizond, become mad. Only last evening, when seated in my favorite corner on the drawing-room sofa, buried in the mysteries of this mysterious book, following the hero to the depths of the bottomless pit, Aunt Prim approached, and I saluted her with

"Spectre of the tombs, avaunt!"

at which she looked at me, both amazed and horrified.

"That must be a curious book you are reading!" she said grimly. And I as grimly replied,

"It is."

Soon after, Madge came tripping into the room, singing a favorite aria from the last new opera. That tiresome girl is *always* singing! And I exclaimed, "Hush, Daughter of the Prophets, and let my soul have peace! Though thy face be bright as the morning star, yet art thou like those apples that grow upon the shores of the Dead Sea, which, though beautiful to look upon, within are ashes! Though thou excellest the women of Yezd in beauty, yet thy soul is frivolity itself!"

"*Mirabile dictu!*" gasped Madge, transfixed with amazement at this unexpected sally. "What have I to do, I should like to know, with the apples of the Dead Sea? and who are the women of Yezd?" Here she quite recovered her breath, and began to rattle away with such volubility about the elegant new suits worn by the Misses Butterfly, when they called in the morning, that I rushed from the drawing-room in despair, taking "Warwick" with me. I sought the quiet of my own apartment, and, drawing an easy-chair directly in front of the large mirror, before which the gas burned brilliantly, I seated myself, and gave that young lady, my *vis-à-vis* in the mirror, a good talking to.

"What a foolish, silly girl you are, sitting there

in the mirror ! I feel quite inclined to banish you from the Sparkle family altogether for your stupidity. Ever since you read that book, you have been looking eagerly in society for some *Constant Earle*—some wondrously gifted youth, who should unite the wisdom of the sages with the beauty of Apollo !

“ If you walked on Broadway, your eyes have been roving restlessly, in hope of seeing some pale, interesting youth, with a shabby coat, and a bundle under his arm, which bundle was supposed to contain the fruits of his brain, *preserved* in violet ink. But you looked in vain ; for the young men who wore shabby coats were shabby themselves ; and, if they carried parcels, they were most undoubtedly dry-goods, boots to be mended, or cigar-boxes. No grand poems, or wonderful romances in those parcels, carried by the shabby young men on Broadway.

“ And you have attended matinées, concerts, the opera, and every place where youth, beauty, and talent are wont to meet ; and you have eagerly scanned every face in search of your ideal hero. But all in vain ! You have visited art-galleries, and amid the throng of living and of pictured faces which surrounded you, you have gazed lovingly and

eagerly for that *one* face which haunts your dreams. And still you found it not. Now, Sparkle, sitting over there in the mirror, give folly to the winds! There never was, there never will be such an immaculate piece of humanity as Constant Earle. And if you should find him—he would be married! And then what right would you have to adore him?

“Madge says Mr. Cecil is like him—but Madge is strongly prejudiced in favor of Mr. Cecil—and not until that gentleman descends into some bottomless pit, as did the hero of this novel, and discovers a fortune, will I acknowledge the likeness. Even then it would be very remote. You must take men as they *are*, my dear. Not as they are pictured in novels. And a tiresome, stupid, bothersome, intractable set of mortals they are, I can assure you! And now, Sparkle, I hope this will put an end to your nonsense!”

Having finished my lecture to that young lady in the mirror, I leaned back in my chair, and, after reading the last chapter of “Warwick,” I fell asleep. And such a dream as followed! The author of that book is responsible for it! I dreamed that I sat in an eastern grove, beneath the shade of the beautiful Amrita, or Immortal tree; that the songs of myriads of nightingales flooded the air with

music ; and the white blossoms of the Sandal Malam made deliciously fragrant the breath of night. And, mingled with the sweet odor of these flowers, was that of the blossoms of the Nagaccsara tree, whose fragrance is so intoxicating that Canadeva, the God of Love, fills his quiver with these flowers. And there came, stealing through the fragrant grove, the lute-like murmuring of Chindara's fount. Just above my head hovered that wonderful bird, the Huma, whose song foretells royalty to the mortal above whose head it folds his wings. And hovering in the tree above me, this marvellous bird poured forth a witching strain of melody, And immediately I, a wanderer from the far-off Isle of Manhattan, became a Princess of Hindostan, and fell passionately in love with the God Crishna—whom all Indian women adore! And Crishna himself stood in all the glory of his beauty before me. The evening air was already laden with music, but when he spoke his voice was far sweeter than the voices of those who had eaten the leaves of that enchanted tree which grows over the tomb of the great musician, Tan Sein. And then the god Crishna seated himself beside me, upon a silken couch, filled with rose-leaves gathered from the rare roses which bloom in the Garden of the Nile—

the most beautiful in the world. Gracefully my Indian Apollo swept his fingers over a silver-tongued lute—which a slave had brought him—and then he sang, and his singing was like the sound of those bells which hang from celestial trees, and which, swaying to and fro in the wind that floats from the Great White Throne, waken melody for the ears of the blessed! And thus he sang—

“Nourjehan! Light of the World! Thou art lovelier than the nightingale’s song, and sweeter than the blossoms in Camadeva’s quiver! Thy tresses are bright as the golden-hued flowers which float upon Hemasagara’s waters—upon the Sea of Gold—and thine eyes are as blue as the water-lilies in the vale of Cashmere!”

As I listened, enraptured, to every note, and gazed admiringly upon his handsome face—whose face should it be, but—*Fitz Hugh’s!* Soon after I made this wonderful discovery the grove around us became filled with strange, fantastic beings, and then a troop of demons, led by the dread Silitim, and followed by the terrible Ghoolie Beeaban, appeared, and disturbed our charming *tête-à-tête*. A form and face, ugly as the face and form of Hakem-ben-Haschem, drew near me, and I started up in affright. Near by stood my faithful Arabian horse, one of that

famous Kochlani breed, whose written genealogy has been kept for two thousand years, and who are said to have descended from King Solomon's steeds.

I quickly mounted this beautiful horse, and strove to escape. But suddenly the terrible sound of the Kerna, the war trumpet of the Arabs, pierced my ear, and, screaming with affright—I awoke. And there I sat in the easy-chair with “Warwick” upon my lap, and that saucy girl in the mirror laughing at me!

XXXII.

SUNDAY AT THE SPRINGS.

THE Sabbath bells ring out as sweetly here to summon the wayward and erring to leave for a little hour their pleasure and frivolity, as in quieter places, where the hush of the sacred day lies not only upon the people, but also upon the town. Although the throng at the hotels never seems to diminish, yet the churches are all well filled. This morning the Rev. Dr. Highlyer from Gotham was announced to preach, and crowds of people went to hear him.

You remember that his church is one of those magnificent edifices far up on Fifth Avenue.

The sermon of this morning was pronounced to be a delightful one. It was none of those dreadful alarms which the sentries of the pulpit sometimes sound forth; but it was rather a discourse upon the ancient Romans—the wicked Jews—the Pharaohs and the Herods of the olden time, and, as nothing was mentioned of the Pharaohs and Herods of our time, the entire congregation listened complacently, and old Father Mildew, who occupied a front seat,

nodded his head approvingly at various points of the discourse.

The reverend doctor's style is one of the most ethereal imaginable. If he enters the dim land of the past in quest of characters to elucidate his theme, he presents us with shadowy, pale-faced spectres instead of real flesh and blood realities—and as for grappling with the giants of evil which stalk in our very midst at the present day, he would never think of that!

If he does condescend sometimes to bring his illustrations to bear upon practical, everyday life, they are still so cloud-like, so intangible, that the modern sinner may pass through the ordeal quite unscathed.

The doctor himself is also quite ethereal, in fact, *spirituel*, to look upon. His face is pale, probably from long studying; his eyes are large and dark, and luminous with the fire of the spirit which burns within; his hands are white and delicate as a woman's. If he has not been taught by nature to use those hands to the best advantage, then, I should surely say, that Dame Vanity has given him ample instruction on that point. The Widow Dash has not a single art of coquetry more perfectly at her command, than has the Rev. Dr. Highflyer the art

of displaying those small white hands to perfection. He wears the black silk gown with a regal air, and as for the rest of his attire, it is simply immaculate.

When he turns his dark eyes upward, then suddenly flashes them, filled with tears, upon the audience, while the tones of his rich voice ring forth, the sympathetic effect is instantaneous, and many bright eyes are seen to glisten. But those tears are not shed over the miseries and the follies of the present—no, no! they fall upon the grave of the irrevocable past. When the fate of Ananias and Sapphira is told, old Father Mildew listens, but trembles not! The sin of *covetousness* and *deceit* is pictured as belonging so peculiarly to those ill-fated creatures, and they lived so very long ago, that Father Mildew never thinks of *taking the lesson home!*

When the words, “Thou shalt not steal,” sound from Holy Writ, Mr. Bullion, who deals in gold and in stocks, and who is, perhaps, the wealthiest member of the reverend doctor’s church, listens, as a matter of course; but he never dreams that those words apply to him! What if he chances to learn that a certain stock is to be “cornered,” and, taking advantage of his neighbor’s ignorance of that fact, buys all of that stock which his neighbor holds?

Or, what if he himself helps to "corner" that stock, knowing that thousands must lose, although a few will be rich gainers? His conscience never twits him of *robbing* his neighbor.

"Thou shalt not lie" does not trouble Mrs. Proudie's conscience at all, notwithstanding that she never hesitates to say "not at home" to a disagreeable visitor, or to overwhelm with flattery some one whom she inwardly detests! "Thou shalt not covet" doesn't keep Mrs. MacFlimsey from gazing longingly at her neighbor's new India shawl, during all the service; nor her daughter Flora from having a strong desire to annihilate my eyes on account of Fitz Hugh! In the pew directly in front of us, sat Deacon Sombre and his family. When the silver plate goes round, the deacon always gives liberally. And the deacon's wife also has a reputation for generosity of character. She has been so very kind, especially to the minister. She it was who presented him with the elegant *negligé* and the embroidered slippers, which he wears of a morning in his study; she it was who presented those beautiful pieces of velvet, embroidered with gold, which hang from the Bible and prayer-book. And that superb altar-cloth was also her gift. Ah! who, in all that great congregation, is so very, very liberal

as Mrs. Deacon Sombre? And yet—there lives a poor relative in the deacon's family, who occupies a dreary little room in the top of their elegant mansion, and who slaves there, alone and in sadness, from morning till night, preparing the finery of the deacon's fashionable daughters! If "charity begins at home," there are, alas! too many exceptions to the rule! Just opposite Deacon Sombre's pew, in Dr. Highflyer's own church in Gotham, is that of Papa Goldbug. They are new-comers to this fashionable church. As they have risen in the scale of fashion, they have also risen from the plain little sanctuary in the lower part of the city, which they frequented in former years. They find themselves here in an altogether new atmosphere. Papa Goldbug hardly feels himself at home as yet. He gazes admiringly around the spacious edifice, while his fussy, pretentious little wife is busily engaged in scanning the latest novelties in cloaks or bonnets from Paris, and the endless variety of costumes displayed by the belles of Upper-tendom. The little Goldbug, their daughter, criticises the dresses, the minister, the music, and is almost as much interested as though she were listening to a new play or an opera. The music, of course, is of the highest order, since the quartet is formed by singers from

the Italian Opera. Services sometimes commence with a prelude upon the grand organ, arranged from "Faust," and end with the shadow aria from "Dinorah" !

Madge says that if "it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter heaven," she would like to know how the Rev. Dr. Highflyer, with his congregation, is ever to reach that place. But Madge is such a queer girl !

XXXIII.

A DUEL.

THERE are some things which we had really supposed to have become obsolete—customs and costumes which are only worthy of being brought up to be wondered at, and shrink back into their forgotten corners with a thank Heaven! that they have departed in peace.

We refer just now to the duel—for who ever hears of a duel nowadays?

We had thought that duels belonged to those “good old times” to which elderly people are so fond of referring—those days when men and women were wrapped up in saintly perfection, and knew nothing of the vices of this “degenerate age.”

We had fondly cherished the idea that the duel went out with the sword which once belonged to the dress suit of a gentleman in the olden time—with the velvet knee-breeches, the gold buckles, and powdered perukes.

Really, we are surprised that any young person

of modern ideas can be so extremely old-fashioned as to thirst for a duel.

But there is no accounting for the whimsical caprices of men—to say nothing of women—and therefore Saratoga is blessed with a new sensation—entirely new, and quite absurd enough to make the fashionable world hold its breath for a moment and lift up its hands in holy horror.

The rumor has flown from mouth to mouth—has even crept into the newspapers, to fill up and enliven the reporter's column—that a duel between two distinguished young gentlemen here is on the *tapis*.

A fiery young Colonel from the impetuous South is reported to have challenged to mortal combat a quiet, "inoffensive citizen" of the North.

Now, this challenge from the hot-headed Southerner might possibly be a source of extreme surprise to the young man of the North, since we know very little or nothing of duels here.

A genuine "free fight," gotten up on the spur of the moment, might be understood; but, since the day that Aaron Burr shot Alexander Hamilton in cold blood, the duel has not been excessively popular with us—in fact, it has utterly lost prestige.

We may be lacking the proper spirit for understanding the best *modus operandi* of settling a quar-

rel and resenting an affront; but, after all, we cannot help thinking that it is a most comfortable state of affairs when a man has courage enough to pass by an insult or to rise above an injury, without the aid of a sword or of a revolver.

We really cannot see, despite the sneers at our cowardice by the ardent Southerner, that the duel is absolutely essential to our happiness, or to our credit.

The late tournament, which was intended to revive the ancient spirit of chivalry in the manly hearts of those who have of late been given more to the displaying of diamond studs and marvellous pins than anything else, has given rise to the rumored duel.

The tournament was intended to be a friendly competition in horsemanship between the young men of the North and of the South, and was projected by, and carried out under the supervision of a young Southerner who is a Colonel in the army.

After the tournament there came to the gallant Colonel's ears a contemptuous remark made by a wealthy young gentleman, who floats upon the cream of fashionable society, to the effect that the brave "Knights" from the South were only "country

bumpkins" instead of belonging to the F. F. V.'s, and that the tournament was nothing but a "two-penny show."

Now, such a statement as this was terrible indeed, and angered the high-spirited Colonel to the last degree.

Of course there is no better way to resent such an affront than to make a target of one's self for another person's bullet, or to make a target of that impertinent individual.

Please to observe now, that the very latest fashion in targets, is a couple of high-toned, chivalric young gentlemen, who wish to die that their wounded honor may be avenged.

In settling the dispute in question, it might perhaps have been easy enough to refute the slander as to the respectability of the aforesaid "Knights," as many of them are well known to belong to good families; and, as for the "two-penny show," the tickets were something like five dollars for the tournament and ball, and moreover the young man who affected to despise the "show" drove out with his four-in-hand to witness it.

But no, there was no other way to blot out this horrible stain upon the Colonel's reputation than by mortal combat; no way of overcoming little difficul-

ties which might arise between these proud young bloods than by dropping them with a bullet.

The strangest part of it all is that the Colonel's father thinks the Colonel should fight it out; the Colonel's sister refuses to read any more novels, to perpetrate any more flirtations, in fact, to console herself in any way, until the Colonel sustains the reputation of his family by properly resenting this insult in a duel; and lastly, the Colonel's mother hopes that her son has enough of good Southern blood in him to teach these snobbish Northerners how to behave.

And so we have, by the force of circumstances, been driven seriously to think of the duel, not only as a fine art, but as a useful and respectable calling.

Of course our deliberations have ended with the conclusion that no one should be allowed to insult us with impunity! Honor is more than life; and it is not material whether a life is lost or not, in settling a petty war of words. So that one's honor is fully vindicated, one may go to sleep with a bullet through the heart with a vast deal of satisfaction. We are all of such individual importance that to resent a real or fancied affront, we can easily afford to give up our lives and call quits with the world.

And then there is so little for some people to do in this life ; so little life work to be performed, that they can just as well as not step out at a moment's notice without ever being missed.

And we know of no quicker method of exit, none more especially adapted to such individuals, than the duel.

And it is pleasant to reflect upon the charming state of mind which must follow the *survivor* of a fatal duel ; the pleasing recollections of that spirited occasion which will help to console his lonely hours. To carry the stain of a brother's blood upon one's soul through life must be such a comfortable sensation !

But the duel of which we speak has not yet taken place.

If the event is really contemplated, it might be just as well for the disputing parties to select Glen Mitchell, or some other quiet, romantic spot, and admit the public to this "two-penny show" at so much a head, the proceeds to be devoted to paying the passage of the survivor to some country where duelling is more popular than here, and where he may wipe out every stain from his escutcheon with the point of his sword.

But this subject frightens me !

I lay down my pencil to consider what will be the consequences of being sarcastic upon the Colonel and his friend (?)—and whether I myself am not incurring the imminent danger of a challenge.

Can it be possible that I shall be obliged to settle my feathers and flounces and prepare for a duel? Or, will it not be better to look out for some modern Bayard *sans peur et sans reproche*, who will take up his trusty sword in my defence?

Beats there a heart so brave beneath the immaculate plaits and diamond studs of the knights of Saratoga?

I set forth in my Quixotic search.



XXXIV.

AMONG THE LILIES.

WE often spend whole days in the vicinity of Saratoga Lake, glad for a little while to escape the hum of fashionable life. And what place could be found more charming than the banks of this beautiful lake in the fervid month of August?

Sitting upon the shore and watching the play of the sunbeams with the blue waves, dreaming delightful day-dreams, with roguish, mischief-loving Madge upon one side, and Fitz Hugh upon the other, what more could a thankless mortal desire? What matter if the dizzy whirl of hops and balls does not reach us here; if no bebies of butterfly-belles distract us with their chattering, and no invincible array of beaux challenges our admiration, and disconcert us with their eye-glases; and we are not compelled to make elaborate toilettes, and to lavish our deepest thoughts upon ribbons and ruffles? What matter if we are denied, or have escaped all this? We are truly enjoying a blessed quiet in the most unsophisticated manner in the world.

Under the trees, amid the sweet haunts of nature, where the birds sing; where every breath of the summer breeze comes to us laden with the perfume of a thousand flowers; where the wind floats musically among the leaves—the leaves which are Nature's *Æolian* harps ever breathing forth melody; where the waters ripple in the sunlight, and sing of the far-off sea as they break in little waves upon the shore; where one may listen all day long and never hear a discordant sound—ah! to one who is weary of the noise and jar of the city,

“If there be an Elysium on earth
It is this, it is this!”

The cool mountain breezes which ripple the smooth surface of the lake seem to instil a new vigor into sluggish veins, and to promise a new lease of life to those who have grown weary and faint by the wayside.

The principal amusement for boating parties upon the lake is fishing. The water is exceedingly clear and the fish the most accommodating little creatures that ever wore fins; they really appear fond of being caught on a hook.

Oh! if I were some little fish
And lived in a clear little brook,
I vow by my eye, when you went by,
I'd fasten myself on your hook!

That's what Madge sings when she goes a-fishing, and Madge is an adept in throwing out alluring bait both under the water and above it!

Foolish fishes, or susceptible youths—it does not matter which—Madge always has “a catch” on the end of her line.

The shining meshes of her purplish black hair are more dangerous than any net that was ever thrown into the sea, and the soft glances of her brown eyes strike deeper than any hook or spear.

Madge makes a charming picture when boating among the water-lilies upon the Lake. She looks the mortal embodiment of the fragrant flowers themselves as she floats among them. They nestle in her luxuriant hair; they rest lovingly upon her bosom, and, lying in her lap in profusion, they caress her white fingers as if with mute joy, as she groups them artistically and tenderly together.

And while they thus surround her with a halo of perfume, Madge declares that they are whispering their passion for her, and if they droop or die, she says that they die of sweet love.

Fitz Hugh is not fond of fishing, and says that he cannot see why the cruel philosopher who spent the best part of his time in murdering the innocents of

the deep, should be spoken of as the "good old Isaac Walton!"

I quite agree with Fitz Hugh, in this point at least, and feel quite proud of his compassionate nature. But Aunt Prim sniffs her nose scornfully in the air at all such nonsense, says that fishes don't feel, twitches them mercilessly off from the barbarous hook, and when they writhe and flop about, she avers it is nothing but *nervousness* and timidity at being in a strange place!

Will any disciple of the humane Mr. Bergh ever espouse the cause of the poor, abused fishes?

A young medical student, who formed one of our fishing party yesterday, quite agreed with Aunt Prim's notions in regard to the finny tribe, and pronounced the lively motions of the fish upon the hook to be nothing but "spasmodic action of the nerves!" He said they were cold-blooded creatures, and therefore not capable of much suffering, and added a good deal more scientific twaddle of the same kind.

That man is as cold-blooded as any fish that ever swam!

Madge and I knew very well what this disciple of Esculapius was aiming at in thus trying to ingra-

tiate himself with Aunt Prim, and snubbing Fitz Hugh's opinions.

What his chances of success were might be augured from the odd faces Madge perpetrated behind his back, as she dissected his heart with a fish-hook, by proxy, upon the green leaf of a lily!

If the Lake is charming by daylight, what shall be said of it when haloed by the wondrous beauty of a summer's night?

There are but two ogres here which disturb our peace, and these are the night air and the evening dew.

Not that Madge and I ever trouble our heads with such trifling matters, but Aunt Prim is in a continual worry about the state of her health, and as soon as the sun goes down she infects us all with an uncomfortable chilliness.

No wonder that we try to escape sometimes, as we did last evening when we had a starlight row upon the lake.

It was an amusing picture to see Aunt Prim as she waved us an adieu from the shore, wrapped in innumerable shawls, and shivering beneath the mild influence of a few drops of dew.

You would have thought from her oft-expressed fears that we were about to depart with Captain

Hall in search of the North Pole, instead of sailing away over a beautiful lake, upon whose glassy surface there was scarcely a ripple.

Aunt Prim retired to seek the shelter of the hotel parlor, and to deplore the waywardness of young people who refused to look upon things through her spectacles, and would go romancing over the lake, despite the terrible "night air" and the dew!

But, leaving Aunt Prim and gloomy care upon the shore, we yielded ourselves to all the witchery of the beautiful night.

Madge was in the merriest mood, and kept our faces rippling over with smiles at her lively sallies.

The medical student, who sat beside her, was deeply inclined to the sentimental, looked mournfully up to the stars, drew deep sighs, and stole long, lingering glances at Cousin Madge, who was oblivious to nothing—except his devotion.

Fitz Hugh was just as he always is, and always should be; that is, sufficiently engrossed with the sublime consciousness of his own perfections to prevent him from ever losing his own identity in that of another, or from becoming so sweetly oblivious of himself as did the medical student, who nearly capsized the boat and bespattered himself plentifully while admiring Madge's shadow in the lake!

There was a dash of cold water upon youthful ardor !

This little incident, of course, added immensely to the mirth of the party—the student, perhaps, excepted.

As we glided over the water every star in the heavens glittered brightly above us. Directly in the zenith Lyra blazed and burned with a sweet, mystical meaning.

The radiant Cross flashed its rich jewels of stars from out the myriads of worlds which form the milky way, and the bright Northern Crown, Corona Borealis, the loveliest constellation in all the heavens, looked down upon us.

Who has not listened to hear the music of the spheres? Who that has lingered lost in the contemplation of the starry heavens, has not fancied that he saw the swift flight of the immortals from world to world, and heard strains of unearthly music, of divine, mysterious melody?

But our party upon the lake was too full of mirth to dwell upon these things, and they sang among themselves merry little ditties which floated softly over the water, and barcarolles to woo the water-nymphs to rise and listen.

But the water-nymphs were evidently slumbering

down beneath the waves, with the lilies, and refused to appear. And thus floated by us another day, breaking upon the dim shores of the past with a musical murmur, like that of the waves which plashed and glittered in the moonlight as we touched again the shore.

XXXV.

THE FLUSH OF THE LEAF.

THE gay season of Saratoga is almost over. Adieux lightly spoken, good-byes softly whispered, and kisses of farewell are as plentiful as autumn leaves.

Tear-drops, and heartaches, sometimes mingle with them, and there is a little dash of sadness thrown over the sweetness of life, just as the passing cloud sprinkles rain-drops on the roses.

Every dream must have its awakening, and the long, beautiful summer dream is over. The sun has lost its fervid heat, for its beams are veiled in the floating mists of autumn.

The flowers have nearly all gone ; the flitting summer has beckoned them away, and those few blossoms which still linger to catch the warm, rich hues of autumn will follow soon.

The birds are singing their farewell songs to the whispering green leaves, which grow pale and yellow as they listen—or blush into crimson before the fervidness of song.

Even the winds have a plaintive sound—like the voice of one who has just bidden farewell to the best-beloved—for the winds have passed the beautiful summer as she journeys southward.

The fashionable world, which has made the life of Saratoga for so many delightful weeks, fickle as ever, deserts the scenes which it professed to hold so dear, and is flitting homeward.

Every morning we miss some familiar face, some sparkling eye and merry voice, from the piazza; and every evening the parlors and ballrooms are less crowded. There remains now only a memory where some beautiful reality has lived and breathed.

The dark-eyed belles of the sunny South, the piquant, bewitching maidens from the land which glows beneath the setting sun, the staid daughters from New England homes, and the stylish, fashionable beauties of Gotham, who have gathered here like so many butterflies in quest of roses, who have each striven to eclipse all others by their wondrous toilets and their bewildering charms—all these have furled their defiant little flags, packed their trunks reluctantly, whispered sad farewells to their despondent admirers, and departed to prepare for the winter's campaign.

The beautiful dresses which have rustled luxuriously through the parlors and on the piazza are now ignominiously entombed in crowded trunks; and the jewels which flashed their liquid light beneath the brilliant chandeliers, enhancing the beauty of their wearers and dazzling the eyes of beholders, are consigned to blazing unseen within their dark caskets, to emerge gloriously when some fitting occasion shall offer, but no more to illumine the haunts of Saratoga. The powder-boxes, rouge-pots, extra puffs, curls and frizzes—which are scarcely available while travelling—are carefully stored away in the darkest corners, enveloped in many wrappings and shrouded in dreadful mystery.

Did you ever meet and converse with a lady whom, at first glance, you supposed to be young and, perhaps, beautiful; but who, as you scanned her closely, seemed to grow suddenly older, five years older every minute that you talked with her, until, if you were able to continue your conversation with a *growing horror* for one half hour, you felt that you stood before a woman old enough to be Methuselah's grandmother? Did you notice that her strange accent while talking was caused by the "plumpers" which she wore in her mouth to fill out her sunken cheeks?

Did you mark that her eyebrows were false? that she could not call one hair of her elaborate *chignon* her own? that her face was enamelled and painted to the last degree? that her wrinkled neck and meagre shoulders were concealed beneath a false throat and bust of sunny whiteness and faultless proportions, and that the place where this artful contrivance was fastened was skilfully hidden by a diamond necklace? Did you observe that her elegant dress, which fitted superbly, displaying apparently "a form Praxiteles might worship," was so fashioned by the cunning hand of the French *modiste* as to present the sylph-like figure of sixteen rather than that of an octogenarian?

If you have seen and noticed all this, you will have some true conception of the dreadful secrets which some of those Saratoga trunks convey from place to place. Their worn and ghastly owner follows them anxiously, like a spectre in search of its substance; and I tremble to think of the frightful consequences which would ensue should that *baggage* be lost! A curious incident of this kind actually occurred a week or two since in Saratoga.

A lady, whose age is known to few, and is to be queried at, or hinted at, by none—chose to leave the hotel where she was stopping, for the one across

the street. Early in the morning, before the fashionable world of Saratoga was astir, closely veiled and wrapped in a shawl, she quietly entered the new hotel and took possession of her rooms.

Her trunks were to follow immediately. But by some strange mischance—some unlucky blunder of the porters—the trunks were not sent to her rooms, but were carried to the remote end of the village to a private boarding-house.

One solitary, immense vehicle of dry-goods was placed in her apartment, but alas ! it did not belong to her. She looked at its iron bands and firm lock in dismay.

It was the depository of some other feminine capital in society (a lady's wardrobe is her capital) and not her own.

What was she to do? In any emergency it would be impossible for her to loosen the fastenings of that strange trunk—and knowing well what her own trunks contained, she contemplated this unknown visitant with a sort of nervous horror—as one trembles before a hidden mystery.

In a sepulchral tone of voice she ordered the porter to remove that trunk, and to bring her own. The trunk vanished, but the day wore on, and the lady's trunks failed to make their appearance.

The dinner-hour drew near; it was impossible for the lady to leave her room until the requisite articles of her wardrobe arrived. There was frantic ringing of the bell of No. —; there was hurrying to and fro of sable waiters; there was angry consultation with stupid porters; but, alas! all was of no avail.

The lady paced the floor of the room in a state of desperation; she looked out from her window, and then she beheld a sight which froze the little life-blood which was flowing slowly through her veins. There was the Widow Dash, elegantly attired, sitting comfortably on the piazza, laughing and chatting with this lady's last adorer.

At least she had fancied him to be an adorer, and this very day she had intended to complete her conquest. But who would be able to lure him from the toils of the Widow Dash if she once wove her fascinations around him? Who, indeed? This was the climax to her troubles! The band was playing its most melodious strains, but music had no charms for her. There sat that odious Widow Dash, beautiful as a full-blown rose, with her own Captain Fickle gazing admiringly upon her. She turned away from the window in a state bordering upon despair. She threw herself upon her bed, re-

solved to sleep away the hours which should intervene before the arrival of those trunks.

“ If thou would'st ease thine heart
Of love and all its smart,
Then sleep, dear, sleep !

“ If thou would'st cure thine heart
Of love and all its smart,
Then die, dear, die ! ”

But this widow—there, the secret is out!—this widow resolved not to die, but to live, and to revenge herself gloriously upon that artful Widow Dash, when those trunks should arrive.

Time passed on, and the widow slept, dreaming, however, troubled dreams.

The band ceased playing ; the people strolled to the various springs to drink the waters with the charm of eventide upon them ; the sun went down behind the hills ; the stars came out and glittered in the sky ; the gas-lamps, which seemed to glow with a brighter lustre than that of the stars, were all ablaze—and when the persecuted widow finally awoke from her troubled dream, to commence a new series of bell-rings, and to gaze dolefully from her window, she was just in time to see the ball-room brilliantly illuminated, the fairy bridge which joined it to the hotel gayly lighted with fantastic

Chinese lanterns, and over this bridge the Widow Dash went into the hop, leaning upon the arm of Captain Fickle!

And she saw them!

I will not attempt to describe the long, dreary hours of that night, passed dismally alone in the room of a hotel, while the gay crowds without were enjoying themselves in various ways. It would be too harrowing to my own feelings and to those of my readers; but let it suffice to say, that morning at last dawned upon this terrible night, *those trunks* arrived, and about 11 o'clock in the morning there emerged from the room no wrinkled old woman, but a comely, elegantly dressed lady, somewhere between the age of twenty and forty—not older—whose face was wreathed with smiles, whose manner was as placid and as sunny as a June morning, and who was secretly determined to annihilate the Widow Dash!

XXXVI.

DEPARTURES.

WHAT a mercy it would be if the people who leave Saratoga early in the morning would only

“ Fold their tents like the Arabs,
And as *quietly* steal away ! ”

But no—such a bustle and confusion as there is in the adjoining rooms and in the hall every morning, at the untimely hour of six, just when one is lost in delightful morning dreams—the dreams which poets call prophetic. How vexatious to be rudely summoned from the shadowy land of dreams, to the disagreeable realities of great lumbering trunks, of crying children, of loud-voiced papas, and fretful, anxious mannnas, until really one would imagine that the Millerites' judgment had come, and that the whole earth was on fire !

And all this because these people are leaving on the next train !

If they only could possibly remember that other folks in the same house were *not* going away, and

were endeavoring to enjoy a comfortable nap after the late hours of the ball the night before, how pleasant it would be.

Departures, not arrivals, are now the prominent features of Saratoga—

“ Friend after friend departs ”—

and we, too, shall soon be winging our flight homeward.

The fates have decided, and we must go. Fitz Hugh resigns himself beautifully, and strokes his blonde moustache complacently, as he talks of returning to business.

Now, that amuses me—the idea of Fitz Hugh, and business!

What does he do with his lavender kids and his elegant cane, when he attends to business?

Who takes care of that “love of a moustache,” curls it, etc.? Who is to part those bewitching locks exactly in the middle, when Fitz Hugh is engrossed in the cares of business?

And where is he to find two hours every morning to spend in selecting a becoming cravat and arranging it in that inimitable tie, if he attends to business?

Ah, Fitz Hugh! Fitz Hugh! who could conceive

the idea of transforming such an elegant youth into a hum-drum man of business?

We might have started to-day, but Aunt Prim declares she must have time to calm her nerves after the last new railroad horror before she will venture to set out.

Notwithstanding the vast improvements of the age, travelling seems to become more hazardous every year. And one is led to believe that the old-fashioned stage-coach which plodded slowly along, is to be preferred to these new vehicles of destruction, which hurry people out of this world into the next without a moment's warning.

Mr. and Mrs. Puffy left this morning, and Saratoga misses their rotund forms and faces beaming with smiles.

These worthy people returned not long since from a tour in Europe, and Mrs. Puffy is full of amusing accounts of her mishaps and adventures abroad, and considers that she has every reason to be thankful that she has arrived safe and sound upon her native shore.

During her stay at the Springs she has entertained a host of her dear friends every morning upon the piazza, with ludicrous descriptions of her trials and sufferings abroad, and one might be ready to look

upon her as a victim to martyrdom, did not her comfortable proportions forbid.

Mrs. Puffy has brought home with her many articles of *vertu*, which she evidently considers as dearly won trophies. These she is wont to mention in some such manner as this :

“My dear, you know I have purchased a beautiful Venus. It is now on its way from Italy. I long for you to see it. It’s a lovely thing, but *whether it is a Madonna or a Magdalen, I cannot say.*”

Of course we are all on the *qui vive* to behold this wonderful statue. Also to admire the “*stationery*” which Mrs. Puffy said she purchased “to put in the nicks of the walls !”

And Mrs. Puffy uttered her final adieu with a cordial “*Now, do jump down and see us !*” as the train whirled her good-natured face out of sight.

The Widow Dash has disappeared in a blaze of glory, leaving behind her an endless train of disconsolate admirers. Every one of her magnificent dresses has been worn *once*, and, therefore, it was time to shift the scene, and to appear upon a new stage. And so the fair widow, with her pet dogs, her parrot, her maid, her coachman, footman, and elegant equipages, to say nothing of trunks,

valises, and bandboxes without number, has departed. She has taken her farwell of Saratoga, to burst with all her beauty, and magnificence, upon the astonished eyes of some other sphere in upper-tendom.

Our best wishes follow her! But it is really to be hoped, that, for the benefit of all poor, timid, unmarried damsels, the Widow Dash will be wedded before next season!

We had a delightful ride to-day to the lake.

While Madge and the Colonel were making a hideous racket rolling nine-pins, Fitz Hugh and I went boating over the water in search of the white lilies. We had a charming row. It was rather rough, it is true, and the waves came spattering over the edges of the boat, every now and then—and the wind blew such a gale that it took the frizz all out of my hair, and then the bottom of the boat was wet, and I had on thin shoes; and, besides, Fitz Hugh doesn't exactly understand the managment of a pair of oars, and I was several times inclined to "paddle my own canoe." Still, we had a charming time, and arrived at last in safety at the foot of a romantic mound, which has the unromantic name of Snake Hill. As soon as we heard the title of this elevated piece of verdure,

we had instantaneous visions of creeping things, and paddled away to gather lilies elsewhere.

When we returned, after a long ramble through the shady groves which border the lake, we found Miss Madge and the Colonel sitting quiet enough on the bank of a trout pond, fishing for trout.

A pretty pair of anglers they were—as if any one with both eyes open could fail to see that the two were hooking for hearts !

Notwithstanding that the close of the fashionable season is so near, Saratoga was never more delightful than now. The weather is charming—perfectly enjoyable for either driving or walking ; the roads are free from dust, and there is a softness in the sky which foretells the coming of the autumn.

Here and there a single leaf may be seen tinted with Autumn's gold, or just flushing into crimson.

And there is a little haze over the hills in the morning, through which the rising sun kisses the earth as through a veil. It is strange that the changing of the leaf should send people away in throngs just when Nature is about to don her loveliest attire, and when the charm of wood and plain, of placid lakes and running streams, of mountains wrapt in mist, and hills clothed with ever-varying verdure, lies sweetest on the earth. At no season of

the year are the drives around Saratoga so truly enjoyable as now. The fervid glare of the sun has given place to a kindlier glow which bathes the whole country in a flood of golden light, enhancing the clear blue of the sky, throwing over the distant hills a blue ethereal mist, and shedding a tranquil air over the valleys and plains. To one who is weary of the bustle and hum of life at the crowded hotels, a pleasant change may be easily found by a drive out into the open country, over the pleasant roads which extend in every direction from the town. One of these, which leads out to a small village, at a distance of six miles, is a favorite drive. It winds along between bits of dark forests, richly cultivated fields, and large gardens filled with flowers, and all the way are scattered pleasant rural homes, some of them evincing both wealth and taste, while many more are the humble homes of unpretending inmates. But no matter how small or mean these simple dwellings are, they are all so tidily kept, and have such a neat and home-like air, that one feels as though it would be a pleasure to bid adieu for a little time to the giddy whirl of fashion at the hotels, and enjoy the peace and quiet of a country life.

The doors and windows of these cottages are

almost always open, and little pots, filled with scarlet geraniums, or other bright-hued plants, stand upon the low window-sills or near the threshold, while over the simple porch clambers the sweet honeysuckle or the modest morning-glory. And then the bits of green lawn spreading before the houses are so smooth and clean, the shady spots under the old fruit-trees are so inviting, that one feels almost sick at heart when remembering the foolish frivolity of life down there in the village where the strife for display goes ceaselessly on—where every day is an endless round of excitement, and every night a whirl of dissipation.

The belle of the ball-room at Saratoga might take a profitable stroll among these little homes, and learn from her modest sister the charm of an unaffected life. The Saratoga wriggle, the Droop, the “Kangaroo Hop” never flourished out here among the flowers. These rural maidens have too much to do, to go about listlessly, with their hands hanging distractedly from their wrists; and, as for powder-boxes, paint-pots, rats and mice for the hair, switches, false braids and curls, and all the endless paraphernalia esteemed necessary to make up a fashionable toilet—country girls are as innocent of all these as though they never existed.

XXXVII.

THE ADIRONDACKS.

EVERY new day of the coming autumn seems to dawn with some fresh beauty, some added glory of nature to inspire and delight us, and nothing is lacking to complete the charm of Saratoga, but the people!

Ah, the people! Not that every one has departed; not that the parlors and piazzas are utterly deserted; but to see train after train bearing hundreds of friends and strangers away every morning, gives a dim foreboding of coming loneliness, which is not pleasant to contemplate, and suggests the dismal packing of one's trunk, etc.

There are still many people here. Those who are on their way homeward from the North usually take Saratoga on their route, and thus there are plenty of arrivals, but the *habitués* of the place are nearly all gone.

These autumn days are truly perfectly delightful, with enough of sunshine to make everything look

bright, and the air cool and bracing enough to keep us all in the best of spirits.

One of the pleasantest episodes of our summer season was a trip to the Adirondacks.

It being the last day of summer we were bent on making the most of it—and saw the dear creature depart in the merriest mood, with a hearty wish for “many returns of the season.”

To say nothing of the sparkling champagne in which we quaffed our farewell, we also drank deep of the nectar which fills Nature’s cup to overflowing.

To have a new and beautiful revelation of the summer’s glory, on the very eve of its departure, was something for which to be devoutly thankful. And this revelation was our first glimpse of the Adirondacks. Never was the blue sky brighter, and never looked the mountains grander or more inviting; those in the distance dimly and softly blue, those nearer by, covered with luxuriant verdure.

To describe all the choice bits of beautiful scenery which presented themselves to our delighted and wondering eyes, as we were whirled rapidly along, would be a vain task to attempt.

To endeavor to write down, in commonplace

words, the admiration and enthusiasm with which the glory of the Adirondack region inspired us, would be like reducing one of Beethoven's grand symphonies to simple prose. And yet, we stood only at the gates—not in the heart of the mountains. On either side was an ever-changing panorama of beauty—trees just tinted with the fresh red glow of autumn; fields and waysides covered with wild flowers, a profusion of golden and red blossoms flung with a lavish hand into autumn's lap, the last gift of the departing summer; little lakes without a ripple to disturb their woodland dreams as they glistened in the sunlight; narrow streams down which the water came tumbling over the rocks in angry rapids, like a human life fretting itself away in never-ending turmoil and grief; and fairy-like bridges spanning the dark and troubled waters, like that sweet hope of peace and happiness hereafter, which spans the heaven above a troubled soul.

All this, and much more, we saw with delighted eyes, and grafted upon our hearts, to live there, a pleasant memory forever.

And now for the other eyes which shared this pleasure with us.

First, we had a special car all to ourselves. No

intruders were allowed, although any number of rustic youths and maidens, of mothers with troublesome babies, of old farmers and dairy-house matrons came in at the stations, and cast longing glances at our velvet cushions. But all these were respectfully informed that they could "find seats in the next car," by the awful Doctor who officiated as sentinel at our doors.

Not that the Doctor was, in himself, especially terrible, but that he was undoubtedly a perfect Cerberus to those unfortunate travellers whom he obliged to "move on." As to whom our party consisted of, we think we had an average share of the beauty, wit, and talent now in Saratoga.

There was the humorous poet, just as handsome and good-natured as ever; there was the famous authoress, whose charming novels have delighted homes of all grades, have been read alike by "Fashion's" darlings, and also by hearths where "Famine" looked over the pages with hungry eyes.

There also was the "Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary from Honduras," an extraordinary man of infinite jest, to whom we all owed our thanks for our delightful trip. And with him his beautiful wife, who presides so gracefully in the editorial chair of the *Lady's Journal*.

And there was the young artist whose telling caricatures have caused "Honest Horace" to smile more blandly than ever, and Grant to make strange, wry faces; also, the artist's wife and little ones.

And there was a *coterie* of ladies besides—the novelist's fair daughter, the *spirituelle* little poetess with blue eyes and soft brown hair, the "Sentinel's" wife, and the fair Louisianian with her husband.

And it will not do to leave out the handsome young adjutant, who kept us all merry with his songs and jokes; nor the stately elderly gentleman, with the fine head and expressive eyes, who sends into so many "chimney corners" throughout the world his numerous periodicals. And there was Madge, and Aunt Prim, and Fitz Hugh.

Last and least of all was Follette, the little dog of the strawberry-blonde type of beauty, who received more attention than anybody else.

But what is the use of being jealous of a little dog?

We had an excellent dinner at the Adirondack House, to which we were all warmly welcomed by the Doctor.

But, considering the amount of sandwiches, boiled eggs, etc., etc., of which we had generously partaken

while on "our winding way" thither, we were not alarmingly hungry. That is to say, the ladies were not troubled with appetites—the dear creatures seldom are; but the men were as ravenous as ever, and laid away such stores of chicken, brook trout, huckleberry pies, etc., that the only wonder is they all survived to reach home again.

But, all days have an end, and blessed are those which glide away pleasantly—with a halo of sunset at the last.

So passed delightfully this last day of the summer, and all that we have left of it is a cluster of dried autumn leaves, red and golden-brown; a bunch of faded flowers which we gathered among the mountains, and a pleasant memory to which we shall often and fondly turn in the days to come.





HATHORN SPRING, SARATOGA.

XXXVIII.

A MORNING RAMBLE.

WHAT a nice place to live in this world would be if one never had to say Good-by !

Really it seems as though we had rung all the changes possible upon that dear old word during the last two weeks, and now we are quite ready to pack our trunks and turn our eyes longingly homeward. Saratoga is like a banquet hall deserted.

There are plenty of people here yet, but they are not those who have lent a gayety to the past season. The fires are kindled in the grates, and unless one takes a walk out in the sunshine to keep warm, there is nothing left to do except to sit before the glowing coals and call up faces in the fire of all those with whom we have spent happy hours during the summer, of friends whom we have just bidden a regretful farewell.

All the belles have departed, and of course the beaux have followed their flitting footsteps.

That some people are glad to go home, we cannot wonder. Think of the poor mothers and fathers

who have been obliged to sit up night after night keeping watch over their daughters, until the wee sma' hours, while those charming creatures carried on their innocent flirtations !

We know of one old lady who has almost lost her eyesight from being obliged to wink and blink the hours away beneath the glittering gaslight, while she played duenna to a pretty flirt, whose eyes are still as bright as diamonds, and who has entrapped any number of hearts, while successfully keeping her own.

Last night we had the final ball of the season ; and now the lights are out, and the ball-room deserted. The music is heard no more, and nothing remains to lure or charm us ; nothing save a store of pleasant memories, which cling around the place like the scent of dead flowers.

To rid ourselves of a feeling of gloom, we have spent the morning in taking a ramble, in bidding farewell to the favorite haunts and scenes of Saratoga's outdoor life.

First among these are the Springs. There is the old Congress, to which, for many long years, have thronged the old and the young, the grave and the gay.

This water, which has bubbled so freely for over

a century, seems to have lost its pristine fire and sparkle, and gives signs of dying away forever.

What countless scores of people have drank at this spring—and are now numbered, like dry leaves, among the dead and gone.

How many have sought health at this fountain, and found it; how many have drank, and turned away to die!

And now the fount is growing less—fading away—a Lethean stream filled with the secret joys and sorrows of the past.

Next comes the new Hathorn Spring, fresh and sparkling, and full of new life—ready to take the place of the old Congress.

If the latter spring represents to us the waters of Lethe, in the Hathorn we find the long-sought fountain of perpetual youth.

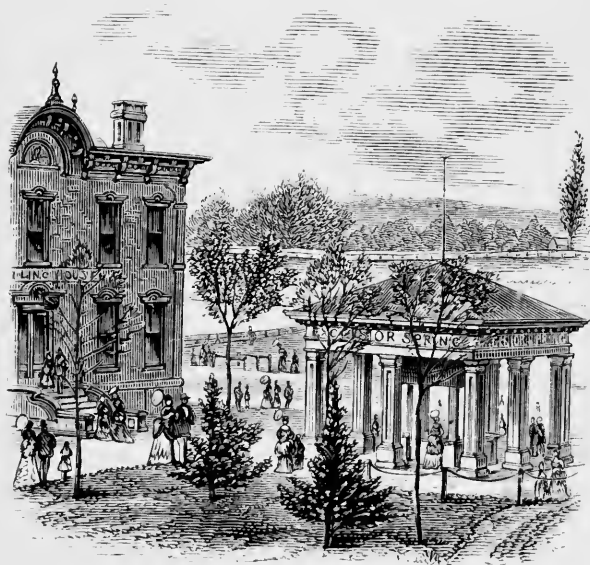
At the Washington Spring, where we go at sunset to drink farewell to the dying day, we find sweet Memory the presiding nymph of the place. And, as we lift the sparkling glass to our lips, with the last rays of the sun tinting the waters, we drink to the remembrance of all those with whom we have spent the happy, happy days just passed.

For the emblem of Hope, one must seek the Excelsior, and a more charming ramble cannot be

imagined than straying through the grand old woods which lead to this spring. Once entered upon this shaded path in the forest, the folly and bustle of the world are left behind, and a green curtain falls softly between the splendor and frivolity of fashionable life, and the silent, solemn beauty of nature. Everything is so full of delightful quiet—no sound save the gentle murmur of the leaves, or the soft twittering of the birds who are pluming their wings for flight. There is a soothing influence in the very air which floats around you, laden with the rich fragrance of the pines; in the sunlight, which falls sifted down through the tall forest trees, and lies beneath your feet, a thin haze of gold, over which the shadows of the leaves are forever gliding.

Just half way on your walk to the spring, there lies a miniature lake in the wood, smooth as glass; a tiny mirror which Nature has left here, that even the forest trees may look down and learn what it is to grow old; for on the brink of this little lake stand the grand old monarchs of the wood, spreading their boughs above the water, and forever gazing upon their own images beneath.

It is such a little lake—and yet so full of quiet beauty; and near by is a rustic seat or two, where one may sit and dream long, pleasant hours away.



EXCELSIOR SPRING, SARATOGA.



Oh, were all of life as full of quiet joy as these idle, summer hours !

Leaving the Lake, we soon come to the Excelsior Spring, and as we sip of its clear waters, it is with the hope that some sunny days are yet in store for us, as happy as those which have led us thither.

Retracing our steps through the shaded forest, a little walk further on brings us to the well-known Indian Encampment.

Here still sits the beautiful Indian girl, who realizes for us the dark Minnehaha famed in song. Her hair is black and glossy, a deep color tinges her olive cheeks, and her black eyes have a soft, dreamy look in them, as she sits just without the cabin door, slowly twining thin chips of willow into fancy baskets. Her name is Eunice. You may look upon this Indian beauty and be charmed with the *naïve* maid of the forest. But, as you pass on, the swarthy, ugly features of the elderly women, and the homeliness of the men, soon break the spell.

These Indians live in little huts which consist of but one room, and here they eat, sleep, and pass the humblest lives with an air of supreme content. Before each door stands a little table covered with specimens of their industry, beadwork, baskets, canoes, bows and arrows, etc., etc.

When the late frosts come, the Indians pack up their worldly treasures, and, deserting their temporary homes, hie away to their native wigwams in the far North.

There are two Indian seers at the encampment, and many a fair belle and anxious lover have sought to catch a glimpse of Destiny's page by crossing the dark hands of the Indian fortune-teller with silver.

Leaving the Indian encampment, we enter the grand old Park once more, to take our last stroll through its shady groves. And so we wend our way back to the hotel, satisfied that a ramble through the woods upon a crisp autumn morning, is by far more enjoyable, and more exhilarating to the spirits, than hovering around the fire, wrapped in shawls, and complaining of the early arrival of the last comer to Saratoga—Jack Frost.

One should have plenty of leisure, and but little of the world's cares or sorrows upon the mind, to truly enjoy a walk.

And then an artist's loving eye and a poet's appreciative soul are needed to take in all the beauties which Nature strews around us. There are the green leaves which the parting kiss of summer has flushed into crimson; the twittering birds who are plan-

ning their journeys southward, and singing their farewell songs in a plaintive tone ; the brown-eyed deer, which are so tame they half meet your caress in the graceful arching of their necks ; the little brown squirrels which cross the path close to your feet, and then sitting upright on the grass near by, peer curiously at you ; the white mists which hover over the hill-tops, and the warm golden beams of the sun which gradually absorb them ; the majesty of distant mountains ; the quiet peace of the valleys ; the glistening of sparkling waters that lie in the sunlight, and the musical babble of the brook that glides through the shady places, and over all these the white clouds drifting across an infinite sea of azure—who that rambles along and takes not in all these varied charms of Nature with a lover's eye enjoys the passing hour to its full extent ?

XXXIX.

ADIEUX.

AUNT PRIM mildly suggested this morning that we had better pack our trunks for home.

We were quite ready to yield compliance. We have gone to the bottom of these trunks so often during the summer season that we are really growing tired of them, and, womanlike, begin to long for *something new*.

And no wonder! For such a bewilderment of draggled silks, rumpled muslins, and dingy laces never set out on a homeward journey before.

Madge says the very idea of being at home once more is delightful.

She is tired to death of frizzing her hair every day for two long months, and declares that should she remain much longer she should die of the crimp!

And then it is so tiresome to be obliged to array one's self in full dress every evening, when one feels much more like being at home curled up in an easy-chair and taking a nap.

It seems such a *very* long time since Madge and I had the privilege of closing our eyes in sleep before one o'clock in the morning.

Even Miss Airs is a little oppressed with *ennui* after such a continued whirl of excitement, and was heard to remark that she intended to luxuriate for the next month at home in loose sacques and old slippers, and to do nothing but read the most sensational novels—*real* love and murder plots.

It is no wonder that the poor thing is tired, after such an arduous summer as she has passed.

To think of the square-inch of embroidery she has accomplished upon the canvas, which afforded her afternoon employment; the half page of French she has meandered through by way of disciplining her mind; the perplexing study of intricate toilettes to which she has devoted herself, and the wearisome hours she has passed in front of her mirror before she emerged from her room to dazzle an admiring world!

What a happy creature the butterfly is, who is always gorgeously arrayed, with no dress-makers' bills to pay, no hair-dressers' torments to endure, and no stupid, lumbering trunks to pack and unpack, as she wings her flight from one place to another!

The penalty of being upon one's best behavior for a long season is too much for Madge. To be under the scrutinizing, critical eyes of the world every day from eight o'clock in the morning until after midnight—to be obliged to look just so—to dress just so—to walk, and dance, and talk just so—to live without the seclusion of home in the midst of an idle, curious, fashionable world, for any lengthened period of time, is too much to be borne with complacency by one so averse to conventionalities as is Madge.

And so, although the summer has passed delightfully, almost like a dream, with its ceaseless round of pleasures, its music, its flowers, its singing birds, its sunshine and its bits of shade—all blending together to form one charming whole—still we are content, and even glad to turn our thoughts homeward again. For, after all, as the old song has it, "There's no place like home."

Saratoga just now is like a glass of champagne, which has lost all its life and sparkle.

Every cool morning is the signal for a new army of departures. The daily scene at the depot just before the train leaves has come to be really affecting to sensitive nerves. Such hand-shaking; such fond embracing, such whispered adieux and oft-

reiterated farewells, and all this without a single tear to moisten the parting moment—is really heart-rending. And then when the train is fairly off, to hear the comments of those who remain behind, upon the dear just-departed; this also is heart-rending! Saratoga friendships are soon made, soon broken, and parting seems to bring no pang.

But there stands that great Saratoga trunk, with its lid up, yawning to receive our dilapidated wardrobes. I wonder if that trunk is tired of its Saratoga season, and longs to be at home again.

And, as I look upon it, I imagine that every brass-headed nail in the dear old creature shines with very glee at the mere idea of home.

It is willing to endure the martyrdom of innumerable bangs and thumps, to be pitched and whirled about by porters and baggage-men, that it may find its way at last to its old familiar corner—at home!

It promises, moreover, to sacredly guard every secret committed to its keeping; for that trunk is destined to carry something more than a lot of dresses and other articles pertaining to a lady's wardrobe.

There are the trophies of the season to be stowed away in its capacious boxes. Sonnets by young

Limberflap—gushing things which never fail to send Madge into spasms of laughter—bundles of tenderly indited epistles from conceited adorers, who will never love any one so much as their own dear selves—which it is just as well to keep from Aunt Prim's vigilant eye; Fitz Hugh's picture, taken in his most charming mood and attitude, etc., etc.

These are some of the “sundries” to be consigned to the safe-keeping of that trunk. I wish it *bon voyage* with all my heart. We are promised a brief visit to Lake George before fairly turning our faces homeward, a possible trip to Niagara Falls, and a few days at West Point as we go down the river—where, of course, Madge expects to lay siege to the heart of every handsome cadet in uniform!

And so, adieu to Saratoga.

The memory of its bright weeks will cast a glow of sunshine far into the coming winter. The new-found friends we have made, the eyes that have looked kindly upon us, the hands that have warmly clasped our own, fancy will often bring back to us again, until another summer shall bring them in reality.

XL.

LAKE GEORGE.

WE are rustivating at Lake George. Really rustivating! We have resigned, with a little half-sigh, the fascinations of Saratoga, and have settled down for a few days of quiet on the banks of this lovely lake. We left our worthy President with his family at Saratoga. It is to be feared that the poor man will have a sudden attack of lockjaw superinduced by the excessive squeezing and shaking of hands which he undergoes. Perhaps this is the reason he is always so quiet

How can a man talk, I should like to know, whose right arm is the embodiment of perpetual motion? What would he do if the French fashion of kissing prevailed among us? Surely he would be actually smothered, by the embraces of the Goldbugs, the Money-Bags, the Petroleumites, the Shoddyites, and others of that ilk, who swarm continually around him, like so many bees hunting for sweets! And the ladies, too, would claim their rights, and the hero of many battles would be van-

quished at last. It is but a short journey from Saratoga here. You take the train at the Springs for Glen's Falls, which is a romantic, sequestered-looking place, and is but an hour's ride.

Arrived at Glen's Falls, you are mercilessly tumbled into a huge stage-coach, without even the preliminary caution of "this side up with care!" They are always in a hurry in filling up this stage. They are as much afraid of losing an atom of time, as they are of losing an atom of space either inside or outside of that coach.

The mathematical genius who presides at the stage door, to attend to the bestowal of passengers therein, takes your exact dimensions as you approach, in the twinkling of an eye, and places you instantly in a corner which you seem to fit exactly, without having an extra inch of spare room. Bundles and leather bags, umbrellas, parasols, and baskets, are, as a matter of necessity, piled up on each individual's lap, and then, when the coach is filled to its *utmost* capacity with men, women, and children, lap-dogs, and other baggage—all packed in like so many chickens in a coop, with not even room to flutter one's feathers—you are invited, and expected, by the smiling stage-driver, to admire the scenery.

That driver has a sarcastic expression in the twinkle of his eye, although his face smiles blandly upon you, as he extends this invitation, and witnesses your spasmodic endeavors to peep out from the labyrinth of people, leather bags, and parasols, to view the scenery! And just at that identical moment, when you have brought your optical organs into the line of taking a "bird's-eye" view of the surrounding country, that driver contrives to nearly upset the stage in some terrific mud-hole, and you forget scenery, passengers, propriety, and everything else, to scream out with affright. At least "yours truly" did, and Aunt Prim gave me a vigorous thrust with her parasol, by way of restoring my self-possession!

But who wants to be upset in a mud-hole! Surely there is nothing romantic or consoling to one's feelings in such an event.

Perhaps the best place in the world to ascertain the amount of one's self-possession under the most trying circumstances, is in a stage-coach journeying over an uneven, hilly road. Even Aunt Prim was startled out of her rigorous sense of propriety, and grasped suddenly hold of a fat old gentleman who sat next to her, as the stage gave a lurch forward.

Failing to catch satisfactory glimpses of the

scenery, we devoted our attention to a worthy couple who sat *vis-à-vis* to us in the stage. They were a bride and bridegroom, evidently on their wedding tour. The groom was certainly fifty-five. No widower twice taken in by a woman's wiles was he, but a whimsical, fussy old bachelor, fairly entrapped! We ransacked our brains for a reason, but for the life of us, we could not see why the bride should have taken the trouble to bait for him! But tastes differ. The bride was about forty, and two months ago, would have been called a vinegar-faced old maid. Tall, thin, and angular, she was the personification of female prudence and propriety. We were fairly started on our way when this interesting couple commenced the following conversation:

"Elihu," said the bride, "I know they have got my trunk upside down!"

"Shouldn't wonder; but no harm'll come to the 'fixings' I reckon," placidly returned Elihu.

"No harm?" ejaculated the bride, opening her eyes wide with astonishment at such indifference. But she was too indignant to say more. "Susan, have you got those tickets?"

"Yes," replied Susan, holding up her hand, where the tickets were thrust inside of a cotton glove.

"Well, don't lose them! And the check for the

valise, have you got that?" asked Elihu, anxiously. The check also was shown tucked away in the glove.

"I wish I had brought my thick coat with me," said Elihu.

"Why, are you cold?"

"No, but it might be cold afore night." We may here as well remark that the day, especially inside of the coach, was suffocatingly hot.

"Susan, have you got the big umbrella?"

"Yes," meekly replied Susan.

"And the little one?" pursued Elihu, with an air of increased anxiety.

Here Fitz Hugh burst into a laugh, but as propriety must be observed even under the most perverse circumstances, I had to give him a warning pinch to keep still.

"Susan, have you got those tickets?" asked the husband the second time. The tickets being again produced for his satisfaction, he again enjoined her "not to lose them!"

"I wish that I had brought my thin coat, and my straw hat. The sun looks pretty hot out there—and I could just as well as not have put them in my pocket!"

And here Elihu began to search in his pockets,

as though with a vague hope of finding a stray hat or coat tucked away in their recesses. Suddenly a look of blank dismay spread over his face, as he produced a roll of coarse wire from his pocket, and exclaimed, in the greatest consternation,

“Merciful Heavens! Jehosophat! If I haven’t brought away the wire the men were to lay them ar pipes with! And if I should happen to die before I get back, them ar pipes never would be laid right!”

Here Madge burst into a little ripple of laughter; while the poor bride looked becomingly disconsolate, either at the prospect of such a sudden demise of her new husband, or at the perplexing dilemma of “them ar pipes”—it was impossible to tell which—while her better half, also ludicrously mournful, solaced himself with eating peanuts.

Those nine terrible miles being at last traversed, we alighted, and the last we heard of this worthy couple as they moved away, was—

“Susan, *have* you got those tickets?” and “*don’t lose them!*” ejaculated with greater emphasis than ever. Dear! dear! what would have happened if Susan had lost those tickets!

But, as all troubles are destined some time to find an end, here we are, safe and sound, with our “Saratoga

trunks " unpacked, and ready for any emergency, whether it be a hop or a ball, a moonlight row upon the lake with Fitz Hugh, or an intellectual skirmish with some of the wise Boston youths who are here. For, having bid adieu to the fashionable frivolities of New York society, we find ourselves suddenly in a new atmosphere, being surrounded by the dignified propriety, the ostentatious wisdom, and the marvellous egotism of the people from " the Hub " !

It does not follow, necessarily, that all Bostonians are conceited, but they are all equally vain of the one essential fact of their being Bostonians.

Ah ! why, alas ! did I ever breathe, since my first breath was not inhaled in the divine air which floats over Boston Common ! What right have I to be proud of Bunker Hill, or its monument either, since I am not a Bostonian ? What music have my ears ever listened to worth hearing, since they have never been enchanted by Boston's wonderful organ ! In fact, who can expect to be either famous, or wise, if he does not hail from the modern Athens ? Alas ! and alas ! for the people doomed to sit upon the spokes which whirl around the immaculate " Hub " !

But some day we may be tempted to throw down the gauntlet, and with true Knickerbocker spirit, defend the claims of Manhattan Islanders for supe-

rriority, for pre-eminence, and pre-excellence over these deluded, egotistical Bostonians. But we haven't time now. In just one hour we are going to have a little regatta upon the lake with Fitz Hugh. Fitz Hugh in one boat, and Madge and I in the other. We are learning to handle the oars, and can pull a stroke with Fitz Hugh any day. Madge says that she is afraid of becoming a blue-light, from daily contact with the Boston wiseacres and blue-stockings.

And she further avers, that she is going to make a psychological examination of one of these Boston youths, to learn whether they are afraid of "learned" women! I should like to hear Madge play the part of a *bas bleu*. Whatever she undertakes she usually carries to perfection, and she did once frighten away a frantic adorer by pretending to be given to dabbling in literature, and by overwhelming him with learned discourses from her pedantic tongue.

Poor fellow! he has looked blue from his fright ever since, and doubtless is still congratulating himself that he has narrowly escaped the martyrdom of having a literary wife!

It is curious to notice the views of the lords of creation in regard to choosing a wife.

They expect every woman to be an infallible housekeeper.

They seem to think that every mental development robs a woman of some part of her affectional nature—that a great soul indicates a small heart.

Ah, well! Men are apt to grow wiser and sadder as they grow older. They begin to find that something else beside a pretty face and a good house-keeper is necessary to make home happy, and look back regretfully to the time when they failed to choose a companion, in choosing a wife.

A distinguished man said to me not long ago that, when he married, he “did not want to marry a woman who knew too much!” After he had been engaged in mental labor, speech-making all day, when he came home at night he didn’t want his wife to talk to him; but while he rested himself, she was to fan off the flies!

Now, isn’t that a splendid idea of the utility of a wife?

I hope when that man finds his ideal sponse, that she will lure all the flies and bumble-bees in the neighborhood into the room, where he seats himself—and then fan herself instead of him!

Does man’s selfishness deserve anything better?

To-morrow we are to sail down the lake to visit old “Fort Ti,” and this afternoon we are to go

“a-gypsying” in the woods. But Madge says it is time for our regatta—and Fitz Hugh is waiting.

“My skiff is by the shore ;”

I throw aside my quill

To ply the feathered oar!

XLI.

FORT TICONDEROGA.

THE people who come to Lake George to spend a few weeks, evidently do so with the full intention of enjoying themselves. There is less formality here than at Saratoga, and much less display in the way of dress. Long rambles in the delightful woods, which are so near by, and rowing out upon the lake, are quite unfavorable to an elegant toilet, and, therefore, the simplest costumes are preferred.

These do very well for youth and beauty to appear in, for youth and beauty are charming in any guise, and go far to prove the truth of the old adage that "Beauty unadorned's adorned the most." But then, every one cannot be young and beautiful, and I have noticed that ladies whose complexions require particular care cannot be induced to venture upon the water in a boat. They are all afflicted with nervousness at the mere mention of such a thing, and I fancy they are quite right in preferring to remain on dry land, since a few splashes of cold water would be extremely detrimental to paint and powder !

The Widower Pomfret has arrived here from Saratoga with his two sons and five daughters. It is something to be thankful for, that these daughters are all of a marriageable age! I say this because Aunt Prim seems to fancy this grim widower. Dear old Bachelor Grumpy, with all his funny ways, is surely far preferable to a widower with two sons and five daughters. Goodness! What an addition that would be to *our* family! What woman in her senses would undertake to marry off *five daughters*? I have represented this to Aunt Prim in the most pathetic tones.

Poor dears! It is quite impossible to find, in one short season, five proper, nice young men, to provide for these poor little Pomfrets.

In contemplating this fact, we cannot help thinking what an advantage it would be, if women could only take care of themselves. This looking forward of a young girl, in quest of some stray specimen of the *genus homo* who may chance her way, and upon whom she is to depend for her very existence, for every morsel that she eats, and every shred that she wears, and whose *ipse dixit* is to be the infallible guide and rule of her life, is a popular fallacy which has held sway too long. And it is a fallacy, which, although even now being discussed and agitated, still

holds its place, like those great rocking-stones which you may easily move with your little finger, although human strength is unable to lift them from their places! It is to be hoped that time will change all this. For man-kind as a race are extremely unreliable. If the same can be truly said of women, I should like to know if it is their fault? Who ever taught them to rely upon themselves? I do wish that one of these numerous Pomfrets would succeed in capturing alive one of the Boston beaux who flourish here. It would do my heart good to see one of these straight-laced, sombre individuals, who seem to dwell perpetually in cloud-land (that is, when they are out of Boston), brought low to *terra firma* by the wiles of a woman, and that woman born out of Massachusetts!

These gentlemen from the "Hub" are the quietest, demurest-looking youths you ever saw. They have about them such an air of unlimited wisdom, of conscious superiority, that Madge says she does not utter a word in their presence, for fear of being devoured in a moment. They always appear as if just about to open their lips with wise Latin saws or Greek homilies against the frivolities of the present age. They live so enveloped in the fog of Boston Harbor, that they see the rest of the world through a mist! Not a hair of their heads is

allowed to curl, or to stand upright ; their eyebrows are never disarranged,—but lie as placid and unruffled as the blue waters of the lake ; even their eyelashes move with precision, and the eyes beneath them are generally of a cold steel-gray.

Their toilette is scrupulously neat and precise ; in fact, all is sleek and slender, proper even to the excess of propriety—and all emphatically Bostonian.

Dear me ! It quite takes away one's breath to gaze long at these immaculate specimens of humanity, and it is really refreshing to one's heart and mind to steal a long glance at Fitz Hugh after contemplating these frost-bitten youths from Boston Harbor ! Madge says she shall never lose her heart in the atmosphere which surrounds them. It is too frigid.

We had a charming sail yesterday to visit old "Fort Ti." Our party consisted of Aunt Prim, escorted by the assiduous Mr. Pomfret, the family retinue of Pomfrets followed of course, Madge, Fitz Hugh, and two pretty Boston belles, the latter being attended by two clear-starched "Hub" exquisites, who corrected their bad Latin, and matronized them generally.

It was a splendid morning, and the water of the

lake had never seemed so blue, as it threw up little waves to catch the warm sunbeams and reflected the golden light again and again.

Over the distant banks and over the beautiful islands hung the white mists—the tears which night had left upon the face of Nature, and which the sun had not yet kissed away.

Sailing down Lake George on a morning like this was like floating over the waters of some enchanted land, and we half expected to see the fair forms of mermaids rising above the deep, and to hear the singing of sirens among the fairy-like islands.

But Aunt Prim quickly dispelled all such fanciful illusions, and brought us suddenly back to the cold world by remarking that she thought they ought to cut down “all the trees upon those useless islands” for the benefit of the poor! I should like to see the land which was enchanting enough to awaken Aunt Prim’s enthusiasm.

In olden times this beautiful lake was called “Lac Sacrement,” probably from the purity of its waters.

All over its clear bosom are scattered beautiful islands, which lie as placid and still as a quiet dream beneath the bending sky.

Among these, Dome Island is considered to be

the most beautiful. Here it was that, in revolutionary times, General Putnam effectually concealed his men while he held his conference with General Webb.

What would "Old Put" have done if some benevolent lady like Aunt Prim had had those trees cut down for the benefit of the poor?

Arrived at the foot of the lake we left the steamer and renewed our troubles in a stage by riding four miles to reach the fort.

But we forgot in a measure our feminine fears while passing over this hallowed ground, every foot of which is replete with historical interest.

Of course the usual Demosthenes of Ticonderoga accompanied us, and we made ourselves merry over his carefully delivered oration. He pointed out to us the scene of many a bloody contest as we drove over the sacred soil—he brought before us, in a vivid picture, the gallant Green Mountain Boys, who with the brave Ethan Allen marched upon Fort Ticonderoga, and demanded its surrender, in the name of the "Great Jehovah and the Continental Congress!" And all these, who fought and bled so long ago in freedom's cause, have rested upon their laurels and slept in the silent tomb for a hundred years. The old fort is in a sad state of neglect;

and instead of its stones being regarded as sacred relics, the neighboring farmers carry them away to build fences with !

Would it not be a good speculation for some "live Yankee" to buy up these mementoes of the past, and to transmit them to his children's children, until our country, now so fresh and young, has grown old, and the relics of her youth shall have become of priceless value ? For time, which covers the dead oak with ivy, also flings over the dead past the veil of affection and of reverential awe.

The sail up the lake, returning homeward, to Fort William Henry, was a delightful one. The young moon and the bright-eyed stars came out to keep vigil as we glided swiftly over the shining water. Fitz Hugh became inspired with the romance of the hour, and told me something which only the stars heard ; and one does not mind having the stars for confidants, since they never betray the secrets revealed to them !

Even Aunt Prim looked pathetically up to the moon, and breathed a sigh, which was probably in memory of Bachelor Grumpy.

Just to think of Aunt Prim's standing out on deck in the night air to look at the moon, and waste her thoughts upon that thankless man, thereby incurring

the risk of terrific rheumatics! What a self-sacrificing life a woman lives! Meanwhile that mischievous Madge was doing her best to horrify a learned Bostonian youth by her wisdom, but he didn't seem horrified in the least—only amused. And he inflicted such a vast amount of both ancient and modern lore upon poor Madge that she began to yawn, and fancied that she had the worst of the bargain.

You cannot frighten your modern Athenians by your learning, my fair sisters. They really expect something more of a woman than that she should know how to “brush away flies.”

As we glided past the beautiful, fairy-like islands sleeping so quietly in the moonlight, Madge said that she would love to have a little isle of her own, on which she might dwell forever. But Madge is sadly given to romancing—and it is to be feared would find an island home quite unendurable. What! no dinner-parties, no hops or balls, no concerts, save the tree toad and the katydid duets, no German, no opera, no anything worth living for! As if one could possibly exist in a place where the latest fashions were not to be had! As if one could bid adieu forever to point-lace and satin, and wear

linsey-woolsey all the rest of one's days without being heart-broken !

As we drew near Caldwell Landing, strains of music came floating toward us on the evening air, and we could see the Fort William Henry ablaze with lights which twinkled through the trees like myriads of stars.

Madge is already turning her bright eyes southward, in anticipation of a few days at West Point, before we finally recross the threshold of home. Fitz Hugh says a girl would fall in love with a blue-coat with gilt buttons if there were no one inside of it !

XLII.

NIAGARA FALLS.

A VISIT to Niagara Falls in the beautiful month of September, after a gay season at Saratoga and other fashionable resorts, is apt to be beneficial in more ways than one.

The contemplation of Nature in her grandest mood, acts as a preventive to one's being spoiled by the display of extravagant folly at the Springs, and from having been drawn into the whirlpool of fashionable dissipation and sent round the vortex from day to day until the close of the season.

At Niagara man may learn much of his own individual littleness and insignificance in the vast scheme of creation. He may look upon himself as but a little grain of sand amid the mighty multitude of men who pass over the face of the earth and are so soon lost upon the shores of the Infinite—a grain of sand which a moment of time sweeps away forever.

And beside the brief space of time allotted to

man, how eternal seems the never-ceasing voice of Niagara.

For ages and ages past, have these mighty waters rushed with a never-ending flow into the dark abyss beneath, invincible and unrelenting as cruel fate, bearing everything before them with a power and a majesty that no mortal has ever yet been able to resist.

And for ages yet to come, although generation after generation of men shall pass away, like leaves before the wind; proud forests shall be laid low; nations shall rise and fall; barren plains become populous cities, and cities whose wealth and power now rule the world shall become like desert places—still shall the thunder tones of Niagara proclaim the littleness of time and the infiniteness of eternity.

Niagara at this season of the year is thronged with visitors.

The sultriness of the dog-days being over, people can truly enjoy travelling in this charming weather—that is, provided always that they can divest themselves of gloomy forebodings of accidents by steamboat or rail, which are but too well justified by the frequent occurrence of mishaps.

The principal part of the visitors at Niagara are

transient guests, people who come and go, and carry away with them a series of pictures indelibly graven upon the mind, which neither time nor change can ever efface.

Amid the great number of summer resorts, Niagara stands alone in the peculiar feature of her attractions. This is no place for fashion and display ; therefore it is that the giddy worldlings of upper-tendom never linger here, only stopping a day or two to gaze with a little wonder and awe at the mighty spectacle spread out before them, and then rushing away to unpack their trunks and flaunt their finery in some more congenial atmosphere.

It is all in vain for the beautiful belle to bring hither her costly silks and rare laces, or for the stately matron to display her brilliant jewels and showy equipage, to win the admiration of the world, for the world has something else to admire at Niagara—and fashion becomes too insignificant, and frivolity too palpably absurd, to hold any sway in this grand temple of Nature.

Even the man of genius, he who has carved his name high up on the roll of fame and honor, feels his own littleness and the pitiful weakness of humanity as he stands face to face with the majesty of Nature as revealed in Niagara.

Here fashion, for once at least, must bend her giddy head in reverence ; frivolity forget its jest, and be awed into silence by the stupendous voice of Nature.

While we are overwhelmed with the grandeur and sublimity of the scene presented by this mighty fall of waters, the heart is also thrilled with the perception of infinite beauty.

One should come to look upon Niagara on these beautiful September nights, when all the stars are out in their glory, and the moon appears in the heavens at the solemn hour of midnight and throws her silvery beams athwart the white clouds of mist arising from the falls.

Flooded with her radiance, the great mass of waters rush on like streams of molten silver, while weird, unearthly shapes flit in and out through the floating mists, now gleaming in the moonlight, now disappearing in the shadows. And up from the white clouds of foam beneath, arises the beautiful lunar bow, gorgeous in color and describing a perfect arch, as it shines resplendent through the thin veil of mist which floats around it. Silent and beautiful as the prophetic stars above, it greets the astonished gaze of a mortal as though it were some wandering angel of light sent to cheer with its soft

effulgence the lost spirits who weep and wail, and send up endless shrieks upon the night from the dark, fathomless gulf below.

The lunar bow is visible only from Luna Island, two or three nights during each month, when the moon is at its full and sheds its light directly over the American Fall.

Upon the left of Luna Island is Goat Island, with its dark wood wrapped in mysterious shadows, and beyond, the Three Sisters, now connected by a bridge, which was almost as great a marvel in its accomplishment, so rapid is the rush of water between the islands, as the famous Suspension Bridge below the Falls. Across the river the Canadian shore looms dimly up in the darkness, and all is hushed in the silence of the night, except the monotonous, steady roar of the cataract, which knows no day, nor night, nor moment of rest or silence, but leaps, and surges, and boils, as it rushes over the fearful brink in a flow which goes on forever.

But if Niagara is beautiful at night, when reflecting the splendor of the stars, and bathed in the witchery of moonlight, what shall be said of it as revealed in the full splendor of the noonday sun?

The golden glow of the sun crowns Niagara with a thousand new and wondrous glories. The mists

which are ever soaring upward, Nature's pure incense to the sun, are now radiant with gold, and red, and purple, and flashing with ever-varying rainbows. These rainbows float in and out from the white clouds of foam like spirits of the air with golden wings.

Above the Falls are the Rapids which rush onward in their mad career, sporting in frantic joy with the bright sunbeams, flashing back their brilliancy, and shimmering each into a thousand rays of light.

No one should leave Niagara without visiting the Whirlpool Rapid, about a mile below the Falls. Here it was that the staunch little steamer, the Maid of the Mist, ran the gauntlet for liberty or confiscation, a few years ago. Many visitors to the Falls will remember taking a hazardous trip in this steamer, which was wont to venture far up into the mist of the Horseshoe Fall; but which was finally attached by the sheriff for debt. But the Maid of the Mist, which had already braved so many dangers, was not to submit tamely to seizure for debt, and her owners started her on a voyage alone down the Rapids. The utmost curiosity was evinced in her ultimate fate, as she was hurried along by the swift current. Upon reaching the whirlpool she disappeared altogether from sight, and was given up

for lost, when lo ! she suddenly emerged from the seething vortex with only the loss of her smoke-stack, shook the angry waters from her spars and cables, and sailed away as dauntless as ever, until she reached the placid waters of Lake Ontario, having crossed the Canadian line in safety, and thus forever escaped the clutches of the American sheriff.

A wooden building has been erected upon the bank near the Whirlpool. Here you enter a car, which carries you down a hundred and twenty feet below, to a platform of the rocky ledge. From this you descend fifty feet further by means of wooden stairs, and thus find yourself upon the brink of the river.

Upon either side the banks of solid rock rise perpendicularly to the height of two hundred feet, and between them rushes the vast volume of water from the fall above, at the swift rate of twenty miles an hour. The river is quite narrow here, thus increasing the depth of the stream, and rendering the mad struggles of the waters as they leap tempestuously forward, foaming and writhing like a torrent of angry demons all striving for mastery, fearful to witness.

It is always a marvel to the beholder how a steamer, or indeed any object whatever, could have

passed through such waters, and have still lived. Regaining the road at the top of the precipice, we left this troubled scene, and drove along the banks of the river towards Lewiston—and no prettier or more romantic drive could be imagined than this. The road winds in and out through deep forests and beautiful groves, past pleasant meadows lying placid in the sun upon either side, but never straying beyond a view of the river.

At Lewiston you cross a light, airy-looking suspension bridge, which affords a magnificent view of the stream as it comes hurrying down, and find yourself upon the Canadian shore. A short drive brings you to Queenstown, where is the famous monument erected to General Brock. To one who has courage to climb the wearisome and seemingly interminable steps of this monument—they number somewhere about five hundred—a rare view is afforded from the top. You look down upon the blue waters of Lake Erie upon one side, and the tranquil depths of Ontario on the other. The waves of Erie are dancing in the sunlight, full of life and glee; while the silent waters of Ontario, with scarcely a ripple upon their glassy surface, lie like one vast unbroken sheet of light. Like these waters in character are the little villages and towns

which are scattered over the country beneath you—whose dwellings look like mere specks in the distance, and whose spires and domes appear but as ornaments to toy-houses from the lofty height of the monument. The American villages are full of life and enterprise—the inhabitants, fully imbued with the national spirit of acquiring independence, by acquiring wealth—while those towns upon the Canadian side are as listless and antiquated as though they had been flung down in the primitive days of the world, and had stood still ever since, absorbed with wonder at their own existence.

Every banquet is said to have its skeleton at the board, and the feast of soul, and mind, and heart, at Niagara Falls, is no exception to this fearful rule.

The spectre who haunts this otherwise charming spot is a ghoul, who preys not upon the dead, but far worse—upon the *living*—and his name is *Fifty Cents!* You cannot go a few rods from your temporary dwelling without being confronted by this monster, and the stamp which bears his name is demanded.

This is called a free country, but liberty in viewing natural scenery is wonderfully shackled at Niagara. The fifty cents imposition of this place has become world-wide.

You cannot cross a bridge, go down into the Devil's Hole, enter the Cave of the Winds, in fact neither cross the river nor stay upon this side, without paying the inevitable fifty cents. The rapacity of the hackmen here is too well known to be worthy of mention. It seems as though there might be some remedy afforded for this evil, that every visitor should not fall a prey to these mercenaries. It is evident that there is a mania raging among these people which only a surfeit of fifty-cent notes can alleviate.

Visitors can reach the Canadian shore by means of a ferryboat which crosses to that side. This ferry is at the foot of a steep precipice, which you descend by means of a car at the top of the brink, which car being once put in motion rushes downward with the speed of the wind, fairly taking away your breath with its velocity!

Arrived safely at the bottom you enter the ferry, which is a small boat plied with oars. The view afforded while crossing the river is sublime beyond description.

Pausing midway in the stream, you behold a sight that, in grandeur and awful magnificence, no other spot on earth can equal. Far above you tower mountains of green water all crested over

with white foam glistening in the sunlight, and evoking shadows from out their own mysterious depths. And there are billows of white, misty vapor, ever rising and soaring upward, catching the sunbeams as they go, and reflecting their roseate light in a thousand brilliant-hued rainbows.

Where else does Nature smile upon her children like this?

The principal places of interest upon the Canada side are the British Museum, Table Rock, and Lundy's Lane, where, during the war of 1812, General Scott first won his military laurels, and where also he was severely wounded.

But the "Hero of Lundy's Lane" was not destined to end his career thus early, as the history of future years has so proudly shown, and Americans who stand upon the spot of Scott's youthful glory, remember with pride the long category of brave deeds which have formed the hero's crown, and for which the victory of Lundy's Lane was but the first prophetic sheaf.

The principal curiosity in the Museum is the skeleton of the Mastodon. There is also the huge frame of a whale, which never fails to astonish the little folks.

Niagara, once seen, is never to be forgotten, and

the greater the number of times a person visits the Falls, the better will he appreciate them. At the first view, Niagara overwhelms us with its vastness and terrible majesty. A flood of new and strange sensations sweeps over us, and we lose all power to analyze them. Only the littleness, the insignificance of man appears before this stupendous masterpiece of Nature. People are as pigmies, and their dwellings seem so perishable beside the everlasting Falls, that it appears mere vanity to build them ; indeed, houses built with hands are incongruous with this scene. The people of Niagara should live and worship in groves, as did the ancients, or build rustic abodes, which should seem a part of Nature. If there is one place upon this earth better fitted than all others to awaken the sense of the truly sublime in man's soul, that place is surely Niagara.

XLIII.

BRASS BUTTONS.

WE are on our "Homeward March," but, allured by the sound of the fife and drum, and out of compliment to the young glory-hunters who have their quarters there, we have stopped for a few days at West Point. Rataplan! Rataplan! Rataplan! Who does not like the sound of the drum! Now if West Point would only throw open its doors hospitably to all spirited young ladies who have a thirst for glory, a passion for laurel leaves, and all that sort of thing, how many belles would turn cadets at once! For what, I should like to know, is so fascinating as a handsome youth, in a gray coat with gilt buttons, and on his head the dark blue cap which he wears so saucily *à la militaire*. It is a great mystery to me that, with all the clamoring for woman's rights which has agitated society during the past few years, no fair hands have yet been heard tapping for admission at the gates of West Point.

I have a mind to beat a loud reveille in Uncle

Sam's ears myself, to awaken him to the fact that he has an army of daughters as well as sons to be provided for.

Have we not had any number of notable examples of feminine soldiers who have won the undying crown of fame by their bravery and their enthusiastic devotion to the cause in which they were engaged?

There was the valiant and beautiful Clorinda, of whom Tasso sang in his "Jerusalem Delivered;" there was Joan of Arc, the inspired girl who led whole armies on to battle, filling their hearts with her own enthusiasm; and, coming down to later times, there was Sally St. Clair, who fought bravely by the side of her lover all through the Revolution.

Just think what splendid officers might be made of some of the pretty girls who are rustivating here! What soldier would ever think of deserting, or what mutiny would break out in the ranks, if a charming young lady like Cousin Madge, dressed in a short frock of blue cloth trimmed with gold lace and gilt buttons, with a little cap placed *à la militaire* above her glossy tresses and worn with a defiant air, should assume command? And then what a saving of rations there would be to Uncle Sam, if all the soldiers, rank and file, were to fall in love with their

pretty commander, for people in love are *so* apt to lose their appetites !

Here is an idea worthy of consideration by political economists.

Fitz Hugh doesn't seem to have a decided *penchant* for the West Point cadets, probably because Madge and I have. Fitz Hugh remarks, sarcastically, that "any monkey dressed in uniform would captivate a woman's heart, if he assumed the airs and graces of these cadets."

But then the poor fellow is growing rather cynical of late, and what he says is not always to be relied upon. I think two or three seasons at Saratoga have spoiled him. He has lost his first belief in the perfection of the fairer sex—from seeing so much of the artificial and false among them—and now goes quite to the other extreme, and pronounces them all deceitful.

However, he has grace enough to except the ladies of his own party.

But, Fitz Hugh notwithstanding, the West Point cadet is a splendid fellow. His physique must be unexceptionable ; he is tall, broad-shouldered, strong as a young lion, and knows no fear. He is inured to every hardship. Wrapped in his blanket, he sleeps as soundly upon the cold bosom of Mother

Earth, with the whispering winds sweeping over him and the far-off stars keeping faithful watch, as though he rested upon a bed of down. And who guesses the sweet dreams and loving fancies which hover around the hard pillow of the young cadet through the long vigils of the lonely night?

As the physical condition of the cadet must be excellent, so his intellect must be keen and bright—the history of all nations must be as familiar to him as nursery tales. He must be able to grasp the most subtle questions with quickness and ability. He must train his mind to rapidity of action as well as his body. He knows that, in all probability, the day will come when with the eyes of all the world upon him, he will be required to plan the most daring schemes quickly; and without the slightest loss of time, to act with rapidity of movement, coolness, and unflinching bravery. He who stands the test when it comes is sure to cover his name with glory, while he who fails is as surely buried in ignominy. It's all useless for Fitz Hugh to sneer at the West Point cadet, for he is a glorious youth, and his greatest attractions are *not* his gray coat and gilt buttons.

At least Cousin Madge thinks so, for she has half lost her heart to that handsome young Achilles, who

is this moment bending over her and whispering compliments in the most approved manner.

Ah, well! "Only the brave deserve the fair!"

The scenery around West Point is unsurpassed. The sublimity and loveliness of Nature meet your eye, turn wherever you will. Lofty peaks, which lift their heads proudly far above the clouds; green valleys which lie tranquilly, like one sleeping softly—half draped in sunshine, half in shadow; and the broad, blue river which mirrors the infinite depths of the sky, reflects the majestic mountains and verdure-clad hills, the quaint castles perched far up among the rocks and trees, the little sequestered cottages which nestle near the shore, and then rushes swiftly on to whisper to the sea the story of all this loveliness.

If the scenery of the Hudson is grand and beautiful in the broad light of the sunshine, what shall be said of it on a clear moonlight night? Is there any picture in poetry or in art which can equal this beautiful dream of Nature? The moonlight casts a glow of beauty over the most commonplace objects; but when the magnificent scenery of the Hudson is bathed in its silvery light, when all the wizard charm of the night is cast like a spell over these rocks and hills, what poet's pen or artist's pencil

could faithfully reproduce the picture? No wonder that marvellous legends, and tales which blanch the cheek of the listener and send the heart-blood quicker through the veins, cling to these shores, for if ever wild romance and poetry had a fitting home on earth, it is here.

One can easily fancy the spectres and goblins which haunt the Dunderberg to be no mere dream; can see the weird spirits which float and hover around old Crow's Nest, or cluster in myriads upon holy Saint Anthony's Nose. And then the white shadows which haunt the dark glens and vales, and which the moonlight brings to view, seem like white-robed spirits; and the mists which float along the shore, just at the edge of the river and at the foot of the dark mountains, appear like airy barques awaiting to carry these unknown visitants of earth back to the spirit-land.

Ah, well, if one should linger too long amid these delightful haunts, the garb of romance would so enwrap him that the everyday world would seem too cold and prosaic to live in.

The only thing which enables Madge and I to maintain our equilibrium, and prevents us from floating away among the clouds, is the gray coats and brass buttons which flutter around us. Besides,

it is so amusing to notice Fitz Hugh's uneasiness and Aunt Prim's increased vigilance.

Every morning at eight o'clock the inspiring sound of the drum summons us hastily from our looking-glasses, with flying ribbons and half-brushed tresses, to witness the "Guard mount;" and then these war-like youths, evidently forgetting their soft good-nights of the previous evening, salute us with the thunder of cannon, and the sound reverberates from peak to peak and dies away amid the mysterious distances of the mountains.

Madge was inclined at first to pout a little at this reception, and declared that "Charles Augustus wished her a curious good-morning!" Aunt Prim finds the noise of cannon and guns uncongenial to her sensitive nerves, and vows that it is a shame for the government to waste so much powder and shot in times of peace! Aunt Prim would be invaluable as a political economist!

After the parade we have breakfast, and speaking of breakfast reminds me of something I saw this morning, and this was the spasmodic efforts of a lady to sever the delicate meat from the wing of a broiled chicken.

"To be or not to be," is a question, doubtless, of momentous importance, but whether it is *en règle*

to pick a chicken bone in one's fingers or to perform that operation with the cruel knife, is also a matter to be carefully debated. There is valuable authority to be quoted in favor of each method, and disquisitions both amusing and instructive upon the subject to be conned.

Soyer, the illustrious French cook, never prepared a banquet but he provided also a great number of small birds expressly for the ladies to pick the little bones with their fingers. Never, he said, was a lady so attractive as when holding the delicate wing of a bird in her dainty white fingers, and ever and anon wiping her rose-bud mouth with the snowy napkin.

Now Soyer catered to the tastes of the most aristocratic people in the land, and may be accepted as good authority upon the etiquette of the table.

But against the great French cook, we have the illustrious English poet Byron, who declared that he never wished to see a lady eat. Byron would doubtless have fed his inamorata upon honey-dew and nightingales' tongues, and but sparingly at that. What would he have said had he seen her picking the bone of a defunct chicken in her fingers? Unfortunately, we of the "weaker sex" are not yet quite angelic enough to subsist entirely upon love and nightingales' tongues, and although Byron

may be admirable authority for moonlight nights, Soyer is infinitely to be preferred for breakfast. So I thought this morning at the table, and I felt very much like remarking to the lady who was making her matin meal evidently in great awe of the sable waiters and the observant strangers :

“My dear Madam—take courage! Cease your frantic endeavors with the knife upon that miserable fowl—and follow Soyer’s advice.” But as I had some little hesitancy in speaking thus to a perfect stranger, and remembering that example was always better than precept, I boldly lifted a chicken’s wing in my fingers *à la Soyer*.

In defence of my “line of conduct,” I quoted Soyer in a subdued tone of voice, but Fitz Hugh annihilated me instantly with Byron, and with, moreover, a Byronic scene! Oh, dear, I haven’t relished a breakfast since; I think this *contretemps* gave me a fit of dyspepsia, and Madge says I’m growing thin!

But I’ve had my revenge on Fitz Hugh. These splendid moonlight nights are especially calculated for flirtations, and it would be such a sin not to improve them!

The hops and balls given by the cadets are all over, but there are moonlight strolls and pleasant

walks under the trees to be enjoyed, with only the stars looking down upon you—dancing in the parlor or promenading on the piazza, and all this with some tall, broad-shouldered youth in uniform, who may some day be a brigadier-general, or a hero with the fadeless wreath of glory upon his brow !

What these poor cadets do when the cold winter comes, when they are left in utter solitude to delve among their books, and in the long evenings to smoke their cigars beside the fire in loneliness—when all the gay crowd which throngs here during the summer months is gone, and there are only memories left of the sweet faces, bright eyes and silvery voices which gladdened their hearts for a little while, and then vanished only to leave a painful void—how they console themselves passes my comprehension.

We suggested the propriety of leaving Aunt Prim at West Point this winter—what a belle she would be ! And I am sure she would not desert her post, if she once accepted it, for she is an excellent person to be placed “on guard”—at least, Madge and I find her so.

There are a great number of delightful drives around West Point. One of the pleasantest is that which leads to Cornwall. The scenery is charming ; the road winding now along by the water’s

edge, now through shaded woods, and again through long avenues of cedars. Yesterday we drove to Fort Montgomery, a distance of five miles, and indulged anew in revolutionary reminiscences. And, at the charming hour of sunset, we took a long walk to Fort Putnam, to behold the river from its heights. A scene of surpassing grandeur rewarded us, for the sun went down in a sea of golden glory, flooding the sky with crimson and yellow clouds, which floated far above the river and cast their rich glow over its waters. And, between two lofty peaks that loomed up on opposite sides of the stream, stretched a narrow strip of tinted cloud which seemed like a fairy bridge over which the immortals were passing.

Why should our artists seek in foreign lands beyond the seas for scenes to inspire their pencils?

Here may they drink in Nature's loveliness, even to intoxication of heart and soul.

And when the Great Artist has touched our native land with the softening pencil of Time, what other realm beneath the sun shall equal it in beauty? It needs only the ripening maturity which years will bring; the clustering associations and endearing memories which shall encircle every spot and make of it all "hallowed ground."

No better place could have been selected for a military academy than amid these scenes of loveliness on the banks of the noble Hudson, for what patriotic heart could fail to be fired with enthusiastic ardor, if called upon to defend, or die for, such a country?

We cannot help looking regretfully at the steamers which pass us going down the river—for we know that we must follow soon. Even the river itself seems to call us with its pleasant murmur, as though longing to waft us homeward.

XLIV.

“EYES RIGHT!”

WHAT disciplinarians they are at West Point. If ever any place of education turned out immaculate youth, finished to the last degree of perfection, surely that place ought to be our military academy.

It would be rather dangerous to marry one of those cadets; one would be expected to draw every breath by rule.

Punctuality at breakfast would be indispensable—no curl-papers allowed there, either—and dinner would have to be in readiness at the dinner hour, *sharp*. In fact, it would be “file right,” and “file left” all day long, until one would feel inclined to break through regulations altogether, to rob all *smashable* things of their geometrical proportions, and to send gilt buttons, shoulder-straps, and all other military “traps” flying out of the window.

A West Point cadet is expected to pay such minute attention to every trivial matter, that the only wonder is how he manages at all to fill his mind with subjects of vaster importance. Here an unfort-

unate cadet is “reported” for being thirty seconds late for breakfast. Only half a minute! think of it, ye-youths and maidens who spend hours in dressing for dinner! Another poor fellow is censured for leaving two buttons of his coat unfastened, another for wearing his hat-band awry, and another for turning his eyes for the space of a second in the wrong direction. What a good thing it would be to send some of our New Yorkers to West Point for awhile, that their eyes might be trained to a becoming sense of propriety, this branch of their education seems to have been so woefully neglected.

I wish all the old gentlemen, the middle-aged men, and the young addlepatates also, we meet on the cars, in the stages, or on the pavement, had been taught to keep their eyes in a proper direction. The way in which New York people *stare*, is particularly remarked by every stranger. In no place upon this side of the Atlantic does one have to encounter such a formidable battery of eyes as in our own city. A young lady enters a street car. If, unluckily, she happens to be the only lady in the car, immediately the twelve masculines seated opposite seem to devour her with glances. Twenty-four eyes are remorselessly levelled at her; although these twelve gentlemen are supposed to be reading their

evening papers. But, somehow or other, the twenty-four eyes manage to peep out from either side, or over the top of the paper, or long glances are stolen from behind it. Meanwhile, these would-be wise-acres hold the paper aloft, as though they were all absorbed in the affairs of the nation, or thrilled with interest at the latest news from the seat of war.

Bah! stocks and bonds, government securities or national loans, peace or war, politics, religion, or murder—all of which are crowded into the columns of a daily paper—are insufficient to absorb the attention of the lords of creation if a pretty woman happens to come in their way. I repeat that eyes should be trained to mind their own affairs, and not to annoy other people. Since only a certain limit is allowed to the tongue, why should not a restriction be also placed upon the still more eloquent language of the eyes?

And how does the young lady enjoy the indiscriminate attention she receives from behind the twelve newspapers?

If she be a city belle, she is used to the strange ways of New Yorkers, and her face assumes a look of the utmost *sang froid*. Her glances are bent neither to the right nor left, but directly before her, and she is no more disconcerted than

she would be at home in her boudoir. But if she chances to be a country maiden, and not accustomed to city impudence, she is easily embarrassed, and wonders what can be the matter that everybody is looking at her. She fancies that her costume is in some way disarranged; that perhaps her hair-pins are falling out, her collar is unfastened, or her hat is put on “one-sided,”—people do stare so! But no, nothing is the matter, except that these starers have never been taught to keep their eyes in the right direction.

XLV.

FAREWELL.

ALTHOUGH the season is late there are some three or four hundred people still at West Point—people of wealth, culture, and refinement—whom it is a pleasure to meet and to know—very little shoddy, very little affectation, a scarcity of the Saratoga wriggle, and even the “Boston dip” seems to lack popularity. Have I alluded to the “dip” particularly? I think not; and, supposing your curiosity to be on the *qui vive*, I will endeavor to explain. Imagine Fitz Hugh and Madge floating gracefully through the divine redowa. The music swells, and then dies away to softer tones; then rises buoyantly again, and Madge and Fitz Hugh float with the music. When this is loud, the dancers stand upright; when it sinks to softness, they bend almost to the floor—just like two barques floating upon a sea of melody, and rising or falling with its waves. And this is the “Boston dip.” But while dancing it, Madge has very much the appearance of being afflicted with fainting spells, while Fitz Hugh seems tenderly to

support her! Now when things become personal they are sometimes unpleasant, and I have therefore discouraged the "dip." So has Aunt Prim.

What new freak Dame Fashion will launch upon society next season it would be hard to conjecture, but we do hope that the Saratoga wriggle and the "Boston dip" will have had their day and have forever disappeared.

We were quite enlivened to-day by the arrival of the Widow Dash from Saratoga. Allured by the sound of the drums, as well as the other numerous fascinations which cluster here, the fair widow has alighted like a sunbeam in our midst.

She came, she saw, she conquered! Already the charms of lovely maidens and sweet-faced, youthful matrons are sinking into insignificance before the bewilderments of this widowed enchantress.

Talk about the stupidity of the poor butterfly allured by the flame! Butterflies are angels of reason compared to these foolish men. The Widow Dash gives an adorer but one look, and he is conquered immediately, just as much as though a bullet had pierced his heart. She twists every man who approaches her around her little finger in the twinkling of an eye, and while the poor simpleton imagines he is gaining grace in her favor, he is only becoming

hopelessly entangled himself, while the artful widow is laughing at him in her sleeve.

There goes a curious-looking couple down the piazza as I write—a tall, middle-aged lady, handsomely dressed, and carrying a pet dog under her arm.

Beside her walks the smallest and most insignificant-looking man imaginable. Some little men have great souls, but the soul of this man could be easily balanced on the point of a No. 10 needle.

And what I should like to know is, that when a woman has a puppy for a husband, why does she burden herself with an additional cur in the form of a lap-dog?

Now, if tyranny ever displayed itself upon a human face, then does every feature of this petty-sized, petty-souled man indicate that he is a domestic tyrant, and that his wife, who is evidently his superior in everything, has been a perfect slave to his every caprice. As she is head and shoulders above him, I have thought of suggesting to the poor lady that when her lord and master did not conduct himself properly, it might be a good idea to lift him off from his feet by the hair of his head, and then give him a gentle shaking. But, upon closer examination, I have discovered that the little man wears a wig. Now

what is to be done under such circumstances? I once read of a woman who had a dwarf for a husband, and when he didn't behave himself she stood him upon a high shelf, and kept him there until he promised to be good. I think that lady upon the piazza might profit by this example, only she ought to place her husband upon a shelf so high that he would *never* come down.

There is no resource left to this poor wife but to join the Sorosis and plead upon the platform for her rights—for rights, I am sure, she never had.

But she has not spirit enough for this, and tamely submits to her destiny—consoling herself meanwhile with her lap-dog. Probably she estimates that it takes two puppies to make a man.

According to my calculation it would take half a dozen such men as her husband to make one good-sized, lovable, respectable man. And then he would have to be moulded out of “better clay” at that.

Madge sits by the window, humming :

“If I had a little husband no bigger than my thumb,”

at the sound of which Aunt Prim looks up serenely, and advises Madge to think of something else beside husbands. Madge laughs and saucily replies : “Oh,

dear, auntie, I wasn't thinking of husbands—only of bachelors."

Aunt Prim took this as a personal affront, as referring to poor Bachelor Grumpy, and darted lightning flashes at poor Madge from behind her spectacles; then giving her flounces a terrible shake, she rushed from the room.

That Madge is a dreadful girl! Aunt Prim feels *so* sorry for poor Grumpy because he has no one to keep his buttons in order. But what's the use of wasting pity on a man?

Madge doesn't mind Aunt Prim's wrath, and rubs her little hands gleefully, for now she can carry on a desperate flirtation with that handsome Colonel who is riding over the green, with no spectacled eyes gazing horribly at her. Madge often remarks demurely that she hopes Aunt Prim will get married before next summer, to which I devoutly add—Amen! It is enough to break one's heart to think of bidding adieu to West Point. But the fates are irrevocable, and to-morrow morning will be sad with our farewells. No more delightful drives—no more charming walks—no more romancing in the moonlight here, where all Nature is romantic, and where every hour inspires us with delight and enthusiasm. The eye never wearies of gazing upon those distant

mountains which rise so proudly to the sky, upon the green smiling vales where only happiness seems to dwell, and upon the broad blue river, which flows majestically along, as though conscious of all the loveliness which throngs its shores. The glowing kiss of autumn has turned the crimson leaves to golden; the sky is beautifully, serenely blue; and every night the great round moon comes slowly up behind the hills and flings a golden radiance over all.

Alas! how few there are who open their hearts, and dwell with a lover's eye upon the beautiful which lies everywhere around us!

In the halls of memory, where hang pictures of the unforgotten, the lovely scenes of West Point will have an honored place, and will shine out brightly, never to be hidden by the shadowy mists of the past. And when we are safely bivouacked in winter quarters, the sound of the drum, the morning parade, the brilliant cavalry charge, the thundering of artillery pealing from crag to crag, and the manly forms and pleasant faces of the cadets, will all come back to us, not like a dream—but as a vivid reality.

And so we bid farewell to its pleasant scenes; to

its summer hours of sunlight, when the birds sang and the flowers bloomed ; when every hour yielded some new pleasure, and every day left a pleasant memory to link it to the past.

When I remember all
The friends so linked together,
I've seen around me fall,
Like leaves in wintry weather,
I feel like one
Who treads alone
Some banquet-hall deserted,
Whose lights are fled,
Whose garlands dead,
And all but I departed.—MOORE.

THE END.

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